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Forum's 25th Anniversary Survey

Like teachers, journal editors must pause from time to time amidst a busy schedule to assess the past and think about the future. As we look toward next year's 25th anniversary volume, we linger a moment to take stock of who we are, where we have been, and where we may be going. One thing is clear: the essential factor in this self-definition is our readership, individually and collectively. Readers are the *sine qua non* of every publication, the reason for its existence.

This is particularly true of the *Forum*, since its readers are to a great extent also its writers. Here we might add that even those readers who have received rejection slips for their submitted efforts have made a contribution, since every manuscript we receive, published or not, gives us a glimpse of the problems and achievements, the status of English teaching and the efforts to improve it, in various parts of an ever-shrinking world.

Like all conscientious writers, we try to direct our thoughts not just to a "general public" but to the individual reader. However, we have no clear evidence of just who that idealized reader is. It occurred to us to try to find out, by asking you—our readers—to let us know a little bit about yourselves: who you are and how you perceive your professional interests and needs. Thus the *Forum*'s 25th Anniversary Survey was born. We hope it asks mostly the right questions; if not, we hope you will add them yourselves and let us know the answers—which will help us to keep the *Forum* headed in the right direction.

This survey is vitally important to us. It is our first attempt to learn from our readers both who they are as individuals and what constitutes the English teaching profession around the world. With this issue of the *Forum*, the questionnaire (see page 47) goes out to more than 100,000 readers in 130 countries. We know that in many instances not only the time and effort but also the required international postage may be a real sacrifice, even a deterrent to sending us your answers. Still, we hope for a good return because we feel we need it. The *Forum* staff promises to acknowledge in a special way each returned questionnaire that includes a clear address. And we look forward to publishing the results of the survey in one of the early issues for 1987—the *Forum*'s 25th Anniversary Year.

—ACN

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Anne Covell Newton
Editor

Mary Jo Ilacqua Boya
Managing Editor

Susan Gail Pollock
Editorial Assistant

Helaine Michaels-Klein
Production Assistant

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25th Anniversary Survey (page 47)

Teaching Literature of the United States to Nonnative Speakers

ILONA LEKI
The University of Tennessee

ILONA LEKI is an assistant professor at the University of Tennessee, where she has been teaching English grammar, rhetoric, and U.S. literature since 1976. She graduated from the University of Illinois in 1975 with a Ph.D. in French, and taught French at several institutions before becoming interested in ESL. Her publications include a book on 20th-century French author Alain Robbe-Grillet and articles on teaching ESL. Dr. Leki has just completed a year of teaching at the Centro Colombo-Americano and the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana in Medellín, Colombia.

When the audiolingual method became the prevailing methodology in foreign-language teaching, the study of literature as an aid to or purpose for studying foreign languages was abandoned as irrelevant. Recently, increasing numbers of foreign-language teachers have become interested in reinstating the study of literature into the foreign-language curriculum. Nevertheless, in some cases it is still not entirely clear why foreign-language students are asked to read literature.

What reasons might there be for requiring students of English to study literature in English, specifically U.S. literature?[1] At my university, the University of Tennessee, the justification is that anyone graduating from a U.S. university, foreign students included, should have some passing acquaintance with the great works of U.S. literature and the great questions of the humanities posed by the writers.

In a program abroad there would seem to be three primary reasons for including the study of literature in the curriculum: (1) to acquaint students with literary trends, history, and analysis, (2) to teach them about U.S. social and cultural history, or (3) to help them improve their English by stimulating conversation and providing comprehensible input initiated by some literary text.

The basis for this article is the argument that curriculum developers must clarify in their own minds exactly why they want their students to study literature before they make literature a curriculum requirement. My second argument will be that, to whatever extent possible and desirable, students should have some input into the contents of the literature program.

Possible reasons for studying literature in EFL classes

In an informal survey I took in my literature classes in Colombia at the Centro Colombo-Americano in Medellín and at the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, 75 percent of the students polled stated that their primary reason for enrolling in the literature class was to afford themselves the opportunity to practice their English. The remaining 25 percent were evenly split in their desire to learn about American social and cultural history and to learn about literary trends and techniques as the primary focus of the literature class.

This is a revised version of an article that appeared in the October/December 1983 issue of *HOW*, the journal of English teachers in Colombia.

1. Throughout this article I will refer specifically to U.S. (United States) literature rather than to English-language literature. My own expertise is in U.S. literature, and I do not want to presume to make statements about other bodies of literature written in English with which I have little acquaintance. I would invite those with expertise in other areas of English-language literature to adapt my comments on U.S. literature as appropriate.

These are interesting statistics, but I am not suggesting that administrators, program designers, or curriculum developers design their programs entirely around student wishes. Rather, I want to suggest that the administrators themselves must sit down and ask what the purpose of the literature course is in their curriculum. The way that question is answered will have great bearing on the way the courses are designed.

Unfortunately, many foreign-language programs abroad and in the United States try to take a position that includes two extreme answers to the question of why teach foreign-language literature. The first answer is an archaic remnant of the grammar-translation methodology. Reading literature in the original should not only be a part of the foreign-language curriculum but is in fact the very goal of foreign-language study itself: to be able to read Shakespeare in English or Goethe in German. After all, the work of these great writers exemplifies English or German at its best. Along with this prejudice in favor of literature as the best example of the use of the language goes the corollary that the works chosen to be read in English or German class be the canon—those works generally considered by critics and university literature professors as the classics and as often as not written in a dialect that is no longer in current usage. Taken strictly, the canon excludes many more contemporary and less established writers.

The second extreme answer grows out of a laudable but misplaced attempt to make grammar practice more meaningful. In this case reading literature is seen as a good opportunity for the class to see the past tense in action, to observe model examples of the use of the past perfect progressive or of modal auxiliaries. More than one anthology of readings includes suggested exercises on finding kernel sentences or sentence combining or changing to past tense. This approach to literature communicates to the student the idea that the literature—the ideas—are written for the sake of the language or grammar and only secondarily for the sake of communicating ideas.

The result of this kind of confusion is the type of experience I had in my own language study. As graduate students in French in the United States, we were offered one course in advanced grammar and eight courses in French literature, one from every century. We struggled with the impossible language of seventeenth-century classical French drama on one hand and with the difficult-to-express notions of twentieth-century existential French writers on the other. We lacked the linguistic tools to deal with these "most perfect" forms of the language, and the result was general frustration; reading became a tremendous burden, a task certainly not sought out in leisure hours. I think I saw similar prejudices while in Colombia with curricula that include great but linguistically complex authors like Faulkner. Reading an author who is linguistically complex or culturally alien can be a waste of time for foreign-language students, teaching them no more than to shy away from that literature. On the other hand, if the goal is teaching literature, literary history, or literary criticism, students are probably better off reading good translations and discussing complex ideas in their native language.

In short, program directors should first clearly determine the goal of the study of literature in a foreign language. If the goal is not primarily to make students conversant with literary concerns but rather to help them practice English (i.e., if the syllabus or reading list is not going to be dictated by whom and what critics consider important), then my suggestion is to include the student as much as possible in the selection of works to be read. It is a truism that the more involved they are, the more interested and committed they are likely to be.

What to read

In this scenario, the teacher spends the entire first day, and maybe more, guiding the class with their deliberations. The first step is to decide what genre or genres to concentrate on: novel, short story, poetry, drama. The teacher's role as guide is to give students information on the benefits and disadvantages of these genres. For example, the students may be inclined to select to read one novel intensively, carefully exploring the author's ideas and epoch (not intensively in the sense of focusing on the language as language). The teacher points out that the continuity resulting from this type of approach facilitates comprehension and is therefore a great advantage to the foreign-language learner.

But the teacher should also warn students that becoming tired of reading about the same subject and characters is a danger in this TV-serial approach. On the other hand, while reading short stories provides variety and exposes students to a wide range of ideas, styles, subject matters, and characters, each new short story is foreign territory, and a period of getting acquainted with the author will be necessary, thus increasing the initial difficulty of comprehension.

Poetry has the advantage of being short and often of appealing to the senses by attempting a re-creation of auditory and visual images. The disadvantage is its conciseness and the lack of linguistic redundancies that aid comprehension. Finally, while drama, of all the genres, can create the greatest sense of immediacy, it is also probably the most colloquial, employing a level of language that students may find unfamiliar and even a level of propriety that may need to be monitored carefully by the teacher so that students do not mistakenly regard vivid epithets in something like *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* as appropriate language for normal daily interactions.

It is also worthwhile to discuss with the students the general subject matter they are interested in reading about. After all, authors, even great ones, treat all manner of human problems, even ones that may not be considered on a high plane intellectually. Why select works dealing with politics or with philosophy when the students are interested in comedy, science fiction, mystery, the problems of young people, or male-female relationships if the great authors have also dealt with all of these issues?

The next step is to get the students to brainstorm the names of authors they know who write in English. Students seem eager to try their hand at reading in the original an author they have heard of; they are proud of having done it. But if I can judge by my experience here, the list they will generate will be an odd combination of highly regarded, established writers and popular, even pulp and hack, writers: Hemingway and Richard Bach are recent examples. Nevertheless, all the names the students come up with are listed on the board. Ideally, the teacher will be familiar enough with all the authors mentioned to be able to help direct students in realizing their preferences. It should not come as a shock that students who say they absolutely do not want to read poetry should select Whitman as one of the authors they would like to read.

Students often have little idea of what century an author lived in, what medium he/she wrote in, how difficult the works are, whether they are considered important or second rate, if they are British or American. So it is the job of the teacher, once the list is drawn, to describe each listed author as much as possible and then to add suggestions to the list on the board explaining why the students might want to try reading these alternative suggestions. This stage is the safety valve for teachers who have firm ideas about what students ought to read, who do not have much option about the availability of certain works, or who do not want to begin a term with a syllabus listing 20 authors they know little about.

Another option in this regard is to bring to class a large number of texts selected by the teacher as suitable and then to allow the students to come to a decision about which ones to read from among those represented. A good idea, I have found, is to include and encourage students to sample minority genres (westerns, science fiction, detective stories, pulp) and minority literatures: works by Chicano writers, for example, had special appeal for my Colombian students, perhaps because speaking Spanish and fighting the cultural dominance of the Anglos are often issues in these works, and the concerns of the authors are, therefore, culturally closer to home for these students than works dealing with, for example, the lives of the upper middle class in New York and their psychological problems. Also I found in my classes a lot of interest in the problems of minorities in the United States—blacks and American Indians—and women. These writers should not be excluded just because they are not yet in the *Who's Who of American Writers*.

In any given curriculum it is possible that as much choice as I am advocating simply is not manageable. Furthermore, there is no question that students need the teacher's guidance in selecting the works to be read. However, since there is so much good writing to choose from for a literature course, it seems miserly to allow the choice to be dictated exclusively by the teacher's taste and background. There is no reason that the teacher cannot work with some previously unfamiliar material.

On the other hand, I have found that it is not wise to allow the students to decide on the entire syllabus; in my experience there was too much disagreement among the students. Oddly enough, while willing to put up with dictatorship by the teacher, the students were much less willing to entertain insistence by a fellow student, and they often feel that (1) the teacher knows better and (2) it is the teacher's job to select the course content. Thus, the teacher should be prepared to make the final decisions, honestly taking into account the students' choices and opinions.

It is also advisable to leave some room for changes after the course begins. Students may move slower or faster than expected through the syllabus; certain works may prove unexpectedly pertinent, causing students to want to read more by that author, or unexpectedly boring, suggesting perhaps, that the work on that author be quickly terminated.

Students in my classes are high intermediate or advanced students. For this level I strongly urge not using simplified texts. Studies have shown that, besides making the writing insipid, simplifying texts sometimes actually makes them more difficult to read, because natural redundancy is removed and information is scattered, spread out instead of concentrated in chunks. There are plenty of real unaltered texts advanced intermediate students can read. The teacher's job is to make those natural texts comprehensible by using pre-reading exercises and helping students develop good reading skills. Several studies have shown that linguistic difficulties are often compensated for by familiarity with the context.

Pre-reading activities

How can the teacher help students to read and help to keep them reading after the course is over? How can reading become not a chore like it was for me in French but rather the pleasure it should be? Experts in reading have developed a number of useful techniques to help students read expository prose, particularly to read material that the students will ultimately need to learn, as in a school environment. However, since we are dealing

with fiction here and not exposition, not all the techniques work. But the general principles can be adapted.

Some of the most fruitful time a literature teacher can spend in class is on pre-reading exercises. In one such exercise the teacher determines two to four important issues that emerge in the text and prepares a question or two which require the students to search through their own lives for similar experiences. The questions do not need to be elaborate; the purpose is simply to trigger within each student a set of associations that will make the student receptive to the possibilities that may be explored in the text. To prepare the students for the often anthologized Katherine Anne Porter story "Theft," for example, my class spent a good 45 minutes discussing their own experiences with robbery. For the Hemingway story "The Killers," the pre-reading questions discussed were: Have you ever been in a situation when you were very frightened, in danger? How did you react? Do you wish you had reacted differently? For the strange Eudora Welty story "Why I Live at the P.O.," the students discussed whether they had ever been accused of doing something they did not do and how they defended themselves. In this last case the pre-questions I selected were not even oriented toward the primary thrust of the story, although false accusation plays a thematic role in the plot. Again, the purpose of these questions is not to make students discuss the most important issue raised by the text, but merely to do the initial prepping that will make them receptive to the text and will orient them generally to some of the author's concerns.

Another pre-reading activity is roleplay. This is a good group activity. In the last example of the Welty story, for instance, the students get in groups of three: one accused, one accuser, and one judge. The students in each group decide together upon a specific accusation and play out a scene, each student arguing his or her case with the student playing the judge asking them questions to clarify the accusation and to decide who is worthy of faith.

A different type of approach, which works for texts directed more toward social issues, is for the teacher to encourage students to come up with everything they know about a particular era. In discussing Fitzgerald, Steinbeck, or a black writer like Richard Wright, students are asked to remember what was happening in their own country and in the world in the 1920s and 1930s: What were the important national and international issues at that time? If one of the goals of this literature course is to teach U.S. social and cultural history, the teacher can bring in background information on what was happening during that epoch in U.S. history. Students particularly enjoy anecdotal history dealing with the lives of ordinary people during the period in focus, the types of anecdotes that come out of books like *Only Yesterday*, which deals with the period around World War I. To this end the teacher can also bring into class pictures from the era. To explain American attitudes about World War I and the subsequent disillusionment with certain aspects of the American Dream, for example, I brought to class photos of World War I army-recruitment posters that I found in the *American Heritage* series and which demonstrated the naïve self-confidence of the U.S. world view at that time. To show symptoms of the tremendous change that World War I wrought in the U.S. consciousness, I had my students re-create orally the fashion in women's clothing before World War I, then showed them pictures of flappers in the 1920s, and we discussed the implications these fashion changes had for the U.S. concept of morality during the 1920s.

Another helpful and usually well-received activity is to bring in a short, simple poem or song (preferably popular) that deals with issues similar to those treated in the work in focus. Again the point is not to find exactly the one essential issue of the story, but rather to prime the pump, so to speak—to engage the students' social, cultural, and linguistic receptivity to one or some of the general points at issue in the text. Popular songs often address issues such as family responsibilities, love relationships, and personal introspection. Teachers can pair themes of songs with themes to be read in the literature. To help students prepare for the Langston Hughes short story "One Friday Morning," I gave them the Hughes poem "Mother to Son," which deals with the necessity of continuing to struggle in spite of adversity, one of the themes in the Hughes short story.

The next step after the pre-reading activities is getting the students to make predictions. Teaching prediction strategies is, of course, recommended for any reading activity, but the strategies used for expository prose are not all applicable to fiction. Since there is no intellectual argument logically pursued in fiction, reading the first and last paragraphs hoping to find a thesis and summary of the argument is inappropriate, as is reading the first sentence of each paragraph—techniques that can be very helpful in approaching expository prose. On the other hand, like the title of a magazine article, the title of a text of fiction is very important, and having students speculate about the subject of the text or the plot of the story on the basis of the title can be a very useful activity. It should be kept in mind that at this point the teacher should encourage the students to make any guesses the title suggests and should not encourage them in a particular direction. Rather, discovery through reading is to be emphasized.

When these guessing strategies have been played out, and again before the students read the text, it is useful for the teacher to give a summary of the plot. A certain reluctance to "give it away" is understandable, but the climax need not be revealed. Instead, the teacher asks questions based on the summary, again requiring stu-

dents to guess at the events of the plot and finally at the resolution of the conflict. The possible predicted endings are listed on the board, and the students will be reading to confirm or deny these hypotheses.

The final step in preparing students to read the text is to give them specific questions to answer during their reading. This step is important, because these questions are meant to direct, not to test the students' understanding or memory. In Flannery O'Connor's short story "The Life You Save May Be Your Own" pre-questions like *When do you realize something is wrong with Lucynell? How old does she seem at the beginning? When do you find out her real age?* alert the students to the fact that something is wrong with Lucynell and that her appearance is deceiving.

All of these pre-reading techniques help prepare the students to understand the text more quickly and more accurately. However, I would discourage teachers from using all the techniques with each text if you are reading a fairly large number of texts. First, using all of these procedures for one text is quite time-consuming, and the teacher may simply not have that much time available. Second, these techniques should not become monotonous, predictable routines, but should rather be a way of varying initial contact with a text so that students are eager to finally begin reading and not tired of considering the issues raised.

Finally, more generally, students should always be encouraged in all their reading to guess at the meanings of unknown vocabulary items. The strategies to be used here are the same as those taught for general reading-comprehension courses. Students learn to make guesses based on grammatical function, for example: if a word ends in *ly* it is likely to be an adverb; on the basis of this knowledge the reader may perhaps be able to disregard its precise meaning since that meaning is unlikely to affect the basic idea of the passage.[2] The student is encouraged to be aware of prefixes that alter the meaning of a word (*un-*, *in-* to make a word negative) and suffixes to change the grammatical function of a word they already know.

Good readers or good language learners perhaps do this almost automatically, but I have often had students ask me the meaning of a word like *unpredictable* when they already know *predict*. It is the teacher's job to make the students consciously aware of what they can do in terms of predicting meaning. Students also need to be willing to dissect a word down to its component parts, determine whether they already know the meaning of the parts, and finally guess at the meaning of the whole. A learner of English may not know words like *daylight*, *wrongdoing*, or *woodwork*, but may well be able to guess the meaning from the more common component parts. Finally, the greatest help for the understanding of vocabulary is context—grammatical and semantic. In the following sentences students may not know the words *slither* or *pounce*, but they should be encouraged to take guesses: *The snake slithered quietly through the grass. When the mouse ran out of its hole, the cat quickly pounced on it.* Nearly all students manage to guess the meanings correctly from their knowledge of the world, their knowledge of what snakes do in grass and what cats try to do to mice. One of my students did not understand the word *weapons* in this sentence: *Ancient Greeks believed that the gods used thunder and lightning as weapons.* When pushed to make a guess, however, he came up with "something to castigate." His definition is not the definition of the word *weapon*, but it is enough to allow him to be able to continue unimpeded by the fact he did not know that word. Another aid in determining the meaning of a word is the natural redundancy of language, which often impels the writer to restate in slightly different terms. If the text is dealing with an old jalopy, the writer is unlikely to use *jalopy* each time he or she refers to it; instead, words like *old car* or *vehicle* are likely to appear, words that the students are more likely to know and which operate as definitions of *jalopy* in the text itself.

However, probably the best advice to give students trying to read a text for meaning is to read for the general idea, simply ignoring isolated words whose meaning the student cannot guess and which do not recur in the text. If students can develop the attitude that it is not always necessary to know every word in the text in order to understand it, reading will become easier, less of a strain. As reading becomes easier, the student will view it as less of a burden, will be able to enjoy it more, and will therefore become far more inclined to read for pleasure, thus accumulating more comprehensible input and making reading easier still. I encourage students to try to read without using a dictionary as far as they can into a text until they come to a point (*if* they ever do) where the meaning becomes opaque, where they feel they have lost the thread of the narrative. They then back up to the last point where the text seems intelligible, reread carefully, trying to identify which words are holding up their comprehension, look them up, and, if the definition clarifies the students' confusion, continue reading, again without looking up words. It is not as though the dictionary should not be used, but it should be used judiciously, as an aid to guessing, not as a decoder for some secret message.

2. Professor David Jackson of the Universidad de Nariño in Colombia quite rightly points out that adverbs carry meaning just as any other content word does, and the substitution of *eagerly* for *reluctantly*, for example, would make quite a difference in the meaning of a text. My point here, however, is merely that even if the student does not know the meaning of the word *reluctantly*, he can probably still grasp the thrust of the paragraph. Ideally, of course, all readers would know all words in a text and all their many connotations, but this ideal situation does not exist and yet we continue to read with understanding and pleasure. I am grateful to Professor Jackson for giving me the opportunity to clarify this point.

As for teaching vocabulary, if this is one of the goals of the literature class, I would say that it is better left for after the students have read the text. Thus, students will be forced to practice guessing, a more useful skill to develop than learning a list of any number of vocabulary items. If teaching vocabulary is an aim in the literature course, the teacher should choose a limited number of words to teach based on the usefulness of the words. As for unusual terms that occur in a specific story and are crucial to the story, most likely these terms will emerge in the pre-reading activities, and if not, they can be dealt with perfunctorily before the students read. Although addressing problems of vocabulary should be left for after the reading, there is one word of caution. If the students are encouraged not to look up words as they read, nevertheless, many of them will underline unknown words to look up later. The teacher should be careful, however, not to be made into a walking dictionary expected to define all the unknown words in class.

Reading the text

The actual reading of the text is normally done at home. However, I would encourage teachers to occasionally set time aside in class for reading the text both in groups and aloud as a class. In neither case does the entire work have to be finished in class, even if it is a short story. Despite the perfectly good arguments against "reading around the room," as it is called, there are also certain benefits to reading in class. If the students are put into groups and have with them the questions they are to answer as they read, they can work together to find the answer in the text as they read. Whether reading is done in groups or in the class as a whole, the teacher can at least be assured that the students will definitely have read at least the portion done in class. In some institutions, for various reasons, it is not always possible to be sure that the students will do the assigned work, no matter how involved they were in the selection process and how well prepared they are to begin reading.

Furthermore, as probably most of us have noticed as teachers or as second-language students, of all activities done in language classes, reading aloud for some reason seems to give the students a lot of pleasure; I would say this pleasure is akin to that felt whenever an acquired skill is performed to the performer's satisfaction—making difficult turns on a bike or on roller skates or in a dance routine. There is a sensation of pleasure in simply hearing oneself say the words in a foreign language. The students reading seem to concentrate on accent and smoothness of delivery. Furthermore, literature is supposed to be a pleasure—many reading or literary groups as well as individual literature lovers read aloud to each other just for the pleasure of reading. In addition, of course, some literature—plays and poems—was written to be read aloud, and failure to do so is simply misusing the medium. The big objections to reading aloud in class are (1) lack of comprehension by the one reading and (2) lack of attention by those following in their books. Pre-reading activities should take care of some of the comprehension problems, and, as for the problem of boredom, on the contrary, I have found the students particularly eager to engage in this activity. On the other hand, it seems wise neither to do this in every class nor for every work nor to spend very much time with it at once; 15 minutes to a maximum of 30 seems reasonable.

My final point on reading in class concerns silent reading. It is my opinion that it is very helpful at the beginning of a class for which a reading was assigned to allow the students five or even ten minutes to reread silently some portion of the text, just to get them back into the atmosphere of the story before it is discussed in class, to remind themselves of the characters' names and to resituate their consciousnesses within the setting of the text.

At the beginning of this article I urged teachers and curriculum developers to include student input in the drawing up of a syllabus. I am now going to urge that students be given further responsibility for the work done in the literature class. Once the syllabus has been selected, the students are asked to form groups of two to four and to select an author or a text that they will be responsible for presenting to the rest of the class. They should be allowed to choose whichever text or author they want; not all the authors or texts should be taken up, however. Particularly at the beginning of the term, the teacher will be presenting the author, text, or epoch so that the students have a model they can follow if they like. Furthermore, there will possibly be authors on the reading list whom the students will have a hard time finding information about, particularly very contemporary or minority writers. Once the groups are formed and the authors, texts, or eras are selected, students must be carefully instructed not to present merely the biography of the author or a summary of the text. Instead they can be asked to concentrate on an analysis of the characters or on the presentation of two or three important themes. They can be made responsible for preparing post-reading discussion questions for their classmates, picking out areas in which the attitudes expressed in the text are different from those of their native culture. They can explain to their classmates aspects of the author's life or times that seem pertinent to the discussion of the text. If they are to do any library work in connection with this responsibility, it is a good idea for the teacher to set aside class time to take the students to the library, if possible, and to explain to them exactly how to look for information on a particular subject; a surprising number of students, even graduate students, have very undeveloped library skills. Finally, the students can be asked to select a passage they

find particularly important, touching, or interesting to read to the class, or, better yet, to dramatize. Such preparation requires every student to come to terms with and to get to know well at least one text or author and to be responsible not to the teacher for this work but rather to his classmates.

Interpreting the text

When the time comes to discuss the story, a good technique is to again put the students in groups and assign each group one or two questions for discussion. It strikes me as a bad idea to form groups and to instruct the students simply to discuss the story. Student reading becomes much more focused when they have specific questions they must answer with a view to enlightening the whole class. Since the whole class will by this time have read the text under discussion, when the groups have satisfied themselves that they have found answers to the discussion questions for which they were responsible, the discussion continues with the class as a whole.

One possible objection to giving students so much responsibility in these classes is the problem of interpretation. Occasionally students come up with misreadings of the text or at least with interpretations that are very idiosyncratic and probably the result of the students' linguistic deficiencies. Depending on the goals of the literature class, the teacher may feel compelled to give a "correct" interpretation. My inclination is to permit the students to interact with the text as individuals, bringing their own personal or cultural perceptions and experiences to bear on their understanding. I do not want to give the students the impression that there is a single, true meaning in the text which it is their duty to extract. If that were the case, why not just hand out these meanings on a piece of paper at the beginning of the term and skip the reading? The current trend in literature studies in the United States is toward Reader Response, toward plurality of meaning, toward allowing the reader to personalize the reading experience, toward richness of interpretation. Since one of my goals is that the students continue to read for the pleasure of reading, I concentrate on encouraging them to take a personal position vis-à-vis the text. If their personal position happens not to coincide with mine or with the author's or with that of *New Yorker* literary critics, so be it. There are all kinds of interpretations done by respectable, educated native speakers which disagree with each other; I see no reason not to allow the students that right, too. There simply is not a single meaning for a text. Most people interested in fiction nowadays are usually willing to entertain, for example, a Marxist or a feminist interpretation of a text even if they themselves subscribe to a completely different, even radically opposed, school of literary interpretation. Each reader (consciously or not) brings to bear on the reading of a text a particular ideology, a personal history, expertise in certain disciplines, and a set of cultural assumptions. In my mind, therefore, an idiosyncratic reading is not only acceptable but in fact inevitable. For those who do feel disturbed by what they consider misinterpretations, I suggest they spend time pointing out the textual evidence for their own point of view and yet keep in mind that if their own perspective does not fascinate the students (though it may well do so), the students are likely to dismiss that author or text as impenetrable, hermetic, and irrelevant because they tried to understand the work and were told they did not succeed.

Teachers and critics may be able to see more "accurately" the meaning of a piece of literature, get more "accurately" to what the author may have been trying to communicate, but that accuracy does not make up for or match what the students get if they have a direct personal experience of the literature, a real personal interaction. The students may get the meaning wrong, but at least the text was meaningful to them, at least they were actively engaged in interacting with the text, not merely hearing what the text was supposed to mean and no doubt measuring how far their own reading was from the correct one. One good reason for allowing students to discuss the text in groups before the full class discussion takes place is that this allows students to work out their thoughts and impressions, think them through as they verbalize them within the safety of a group of their peers without the "correct" answer hanging over them in the form of the teacher's opinion. Then once they have argued their opinions through, they are in a much better position to argue against the teacher's opinion, or at least defend their own.

Occasionally, varying interpretations stem from cultural differences. If students cannot *understand* something because of cultural differences, the teacher's duty is to explain, but if the students interpret the text differently because of cultural differences, in my view, the teacher should do no more than explain what U.S. assumptions would be. After all, people read world literature in translation all the time and assume that they are in fact understanding what they read. I think any of us would find it annoying, to say the least, to read a text in translation, feel we understood or at least enjoyed it, and then to be told we did not understand the text because without a knowledge of the native speaker's cultural assumptions, we necessarily misinterpret. I would argue we just interpret differently.

To sum up, a good program in literature in a foreign language (1) determines clearly its priorities, what it wants its students to derive from the study of literature; (2) gives students input into and responsibility for what goes on in class; (3) attempts to provide pre-reading strategies to assist the students in their confrontation with the text; and (4) respects the individuality of the students' responses to a work of literature. As the students build ease and confidence in their ability to read,

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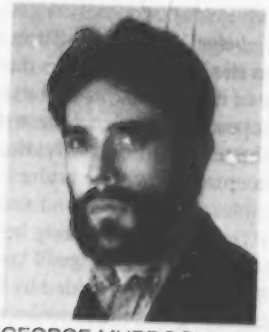
A More Integrated Approach to the Teaching of Reading

GEORGE S. MURDOCH
Kuwait University



GEORGE MURDOCH teaches and designs materials at the College of Education Language Unit, Kuwait University. He was an organizing tutor with The British Council in Tehran from 1975 to 1978, and has also taught in Morocco, France, and England. He holds an M.A. in English literature from Trinity Hall, Cambridge University, and an M.A. in EFL from The Institute of Education, London University. Mr. Murdoch is developing a specialized reading and writing course for student teachers at Kuwait University.

In many schools and centers of language learning it has become common pedagogical practice to devote separate teaching sessions to developing particular language skills. Unfortunately, this rigid separation of the study of oral, reading, writing, and listening skills is, in many instances, not helping our students to achieve a well-rounded linguistic competence. Indeed, this approach may actually be holding back students from realizing their full potential as language users.

Harmful restrictions

By developing materials to exploit and develop students' ability in terms of particular language skills, course writers have created a climate of instruction and learning in which each skill is viewed as virtually a discipline unto itself. More alarmingly still, many course writers make strenuous efforts to restrict classroom activities, especially in reading classes, to ones that will focus exclusively on one skill. Now, there is of course nothing intrinsically wrong with aiming to develop reading skills, but this does not mean that students should be discouraged from utilizing and developing their writing, listening, oral, and study skills in work related to a text that is being examined in a reading class. Indeed, the different skills are so intertwined that any attempt to hermetically seal off one from the others can only produce harmful effects that will inhibit the development of a rich and versatile language competence.

Many materials writers, when devising materials to develop reading strategies, will go to great lengths to minimize activities that involve writing tasks in the belief that writing should be tackled in those sessions devoted to it, and that written work will interfere with any serious effort to improve reading skills. In consequence, the poor student (and teacher!) is bombarded with exercises in multiple-choice format. Multiple-choice obviously has its advantages as a testing technique, but it is unclear how it helps the student to penetrate to the meaning of a text. Presenting a plethora of wrong answers can surely only confuse a student unless the meaning is already clear to him, in which case the exercise will not challenge him sufficiently or involve any work that will develop his skills. Given its dubious validity as a technique for improving reading, one can only assume that the universal popularity of "multiple-choice" is not unrelated to the fact that it does not intrude on any other skill areas.

The dullness of many exercises commonly used to exploit reading texts is also a direct consequence of this reluctance to trespass on other areas of the skill-based curriculum. "Open questions" invariably result in students copying sentences from the text, while true/false questions are only useful as a basic check that students have some idea of what the text is about. Another common technique, identifying topic sentences, is clearly essential, but it is of little value unless the student can

assimilate the information the topic sentence contains and relate it to the entire discourse development and structure. Unless our goal is to simply turn out students who can successfully answer certain types of exercises, we must work toward a situation where the students can relate one skill to another. Any competent language user has to be able to read a passage, extract the information he needs, then be able to integrate it with his previously acquired knowledge, and finally communicate that knowledge to others. Such processes clearly make demands on a complex variety of linguistic, study, and behavioral skills.

A less rigid division of language skills will produce a more varied curriculum, one that will stimulate both student and teacher and result in progress along the total battlefront of language competence. Given more skills-integrated materials, one can also tackle effectively the perennial problem of how to encourage and improve written work. Most teachers encounter a lot of reluctance from students when they ask them to carry out writing assignments. Writing has become a problem because it is invariably deferred till after more lively activities like oral work, work connected with tapes, pictures, readings, etc. If writing were to be integrated into the work related to these activities, the psychological barrier that has grown up around it would soon crumble. In other words, students would no longer view writing as an unpleasant task, but as a natural part of the process of studying a language.

Useful activities

Let us see, then, how this more flexible, interwoven attitude to skills development would affect the kind of activities our students could be presented with in reading sessions of the curriculum. These activities are not intended to replace detailed reading of the text and examination of the devices and structuring that make it a cohesive and coherent piece of discourse; rather, they are intended to develop the total range of skills that an efficient reader must possess. The students are called on to write much more often than in normal reading materials, since, as has been suggested above, reading and writing are intimately related processes, and it is simply impossible to completely disengage the two if any serious attempt is to be made at coming to grips with the textual and discourse features of the written word.

Here are some of the exercise types that could be utilized in the more "open-ended" approach to reading, where the text is the springboard for a wide range of language practice and skills development:

EXERCISES FOCUSED ON THE TEXT

1. *Priming Questions.* The students are presented with a list of statements, questions, assertions, etc., before they read the text. These are intended to stimulate discussion, orient students to the subject of the text, and ensure that they come to the text with certain expectations. In a normal reading situation the student has a purpose in reading. He seeks information, opinions, or answers to questions. This type of exercise attempts to establish the correct psychological conditions for the reading experience.

2. *"Detective" Questions.* This exercise asks the student to search for specific information in the text. In a normal reading situation one often does not read a whole text, but quickly scans it to find the information required. This type of question gives practice in this important technique and also helps to improve reading speed.

3. *Margin "Knowledge" Questions.* These questions direct the reader to the way in which he must activate his own knowledge of the subject, as well as his general knowledge, if he hopes to reconstruct the writer's message embodied in the text. Consequently, the student is asked to relate concepts to others he is already familiar with, provide examples of concepts, and make explicit the knowledge that the writer is assuming he possesses. They also ask him to use his knowledge of language and life, in conjunction with the aid provided by the context of the reading passage, to guess the meaning of unfamiliar lexical items and to make appropriate inferences. Positioning these questions in the margin, parallel to the relevant section of the text, not only is convenient, but also nudges the student into adopting an active, participatory role in the reading process. The form of the questions also allows the teacher a great deal of freedom as to how and when he chooses to make use of them. It is envisaged that they would normally be employed after a first or second reading.

4. *"Cohesion" Questions.* These questions focus on syntactic and semantic devices such as anaphoric reference, repetition, ellipsis, and synonymy, which a student must appreciate if he is going to be able to follow the flow of meaning through sentence and paragraph. This is an absolutely crucial skill, since without mastering it one cannot begin to penetrate to the author's ideas.

Like the questions in 3 above, these questions can be placed in a margin beside the text. However, if it is felt that they will prove too distracting in that position, the exercise can be shifted to follow the text, and the relevant word or phrase that one wishes to focus on can be located with a line reference. It may seem a petty point to make, but it is my experience that numbering each line of a text saves an awful lot of wasted time in class.

5. *Understanding the Text.* In order to check students' grasp of the main ideas of the text, you can present them with a sentence-completion exercise. These sentences, while checking their comprehension, also show whether they can formulate the information in their own words. The questions should be designed in a way

that makes it impossible to merely complete them with phrases or parts of sentences from the text.

Alternatively, students' comprehension can be assessed by requiring them to complete notes that refer to the main ideas of the text.

6. *Information Transfer.* Students can be asked to complete tables, graphs, diagrams, plans, etc., thereby transferring the information they have gathered from the text to a different medium of communication. This exercise invariably elicits a great deal of enthusiasm from the students. This exercise can be used even with low-level students—for example, completing or labeling a map of a town or city from information in a simple text on the subject. Exercises where the emphasis is displaced from the awareness of "doing the exercise" to the solution of a problem spark interest.

7. *Summaries.* By completing notes on the main points of a passage, students can be shown how to organize the information to produce simplified accounts or summaries of a text. A well-structured exercise of this nature will make it virtually impossible for the students to merely copy phrases or sentences from the text.

8. *Dictionary Exercise.* This exercise requires the students to find the main meanings of lexical items that they are unfamiliar with and are going to encounter in the text. Although one wishes students to deduce the meaning of as many words as possible from context, it is not feasible to expect them to guess all new words. This exercise alerts them to possible meanings of a word, but they will still have to judge the correct one from context. They may even be forced to refer to their dictionaries at that stage, but this is a necessary step if they are to acquire good study skills. At lower levels it will of course be necessary to give practice in basic use of the dictionary before this kind of exercise is embarked upon.

EXERCISES EXTENDING FROM THE TEXT

9. *Paragraph Structure.* In this type of exercise the student is made to appreciate the way paragraphs are organized in discourse terms. Flowcharts are a useful way to represent the discourse structure. The ultimate goal is to make the student aware of common discourse sequences in the kinds of texts they need to be able to read and write about. Thus in texts of an academic nature we can point out sequences like "Assertion + Justification + Additional Justification." With expository texts we can point out sequences like "General Statement + Classification + Explanation of Classification + Example of Classification."

This kind of work helps the students see how information is organized, and the way in which they must structure their own writing. When moving toward the production stage we can ask students to order sentences according to a previously examined discourse sequence. Later we can ask students to complete paragraphs with the help of the model. This type of exercise, perhaps more than any other, makes the student aware of how meanings are encoded and thus enables him to competently express his own thoughts.

10. *Prediction Exercise.* With longer readings certain parts of the text can be withheld and the student asked to predict orally or in writing how the paragraph might develop. This gives valuable practice in prediction and hypothesizing on likely discourse development—key strategies of the efficient reader. A variant form would involve presenting alternative endings to a text and asking the students to discuss the relative merits of each version.

11. *"Jigsaw" Exercise.* A useful way to make the students conscious of the structuring of a complete text is to divide up the text. The students, in groups or individually, are then required to fit "the pieces" together in their correct order.

A variant of this exercise type involves giving each group or individual a passage from a story, but this time the goal is to find out what happened, or how, for example, a detective problem was solved. No single group or individual should have enough information to solve the problem, but by pooling their information the students will be able to solve it. This exercise will make the students focus on the links between passages, which they can establish by asking the other groups or individuals questions. The problem-solving element once again makes this exercise very attractive and motivating.

12. *The Function of Sentences.* Work at paragraph level needs to be integrated with work focusing on the functions of individual sentences. Students need especially to be clear about the functional value of markers like *however, for example,* etc. This is best done by designing exercises in such a way that the student sees the relationship of the sentence with a marker to the previous sentence or group of sentences. This format also helps to develop his powers of prediction.

13. *Grammar Review.* Exercises can focus on grammatical points. These points may have been tackled elsewhere in the syllabus, but the rich context of the reading passage contextualizes them nicely and provides an ideal opportunity for reinforcement.

14. *Vocabulary Follow-up.* In this activity new lexis encountered in the course is reinforced with a game where the letters of each word are jumbled up. For difficult words or weak students certain letters can be provided in their correct position. The student must then put the other letters in the appropriate blanks. Alternatively, a word can be given with certain letters missing and the student must supply the letters himself to complete the word.

This exercise not only checks students' spelling powers and recall of new lexis, but also aids their recognition of the distinctive features of words, which in turn helps them to be more efficient readers.

The actual selection of exercise types for a particular course obviously depends on the goals of the course, the level and motivation of the students, the kind of text that the students need to be able to read, and a host of other factors. The sample unit below was written as part of an intermediate course at The English Language Unit, The College of Education, Kuwait University. Although it was written with a particular group of students' needs in mind, it illustrates, I think, the way in which a more integrated approach to reading translates into actual classroom practice. It is our experience that students find the range of activity stimulating, and through completion of the tasks achieve genuine progress in developing a wide range of language skills.

Appendix

A. Priming Questions

Discuss these questions in groups and with your teacher.

1. In your opinion, what are the characteristics of an intelligent person? Make a list of them.

2. How does an intelligent person react if he realizes he has made a bad mistake in his studies or personal life?

3. If you were told that a child who is coming to your class was dull, what kind of study behavior would you expect from him?

4. How do you explain the fact that some children who score high on intelligence tests do not go on to lead happy and successful lives?

B. Vocabulary 1

Directions: Make sure you are familiar with the principal meanings of these words before you begin the next section. Use your dictionary to find or check the meanings of the words that have not been defined.

1. to grapple with (v.)	to fight, confront, deal with
2. to arise out of (v.)	to result from
3. tolerate (v.)	_____
4. puzzle (n.)	_____
5. threat (n.)	something that produces anxiety or is frightening
6. fascinating (adj.)	_____
7. unpredictable (adj.)	_____
8. dull (adj.)	unintelligent

C. The Text

Directions: Read the following text with your teacher:

When we talk about intelligence we do not mean the ability to get a good score on a test or even the ability to do well in school. These things[1] are only indicators of something far more important. By intelligence we mean a way of behaving in various situations, particularly new and problematic ones.[A] The true test of intelligence is not how much we know how to do, but how we behave when we don't know what to do.

The intelligent person, meeting a new situation, opens himself up to it and grapples with it imaginatively and hopefully. He thinks about the problem, rather than what it might cause to happen to him. Even if he[2] fails, he looks without shame at his mistakes and tries to learn from them. This is intelligence. Clearly its roots[3] lie in a certain feeling about life.[B] Just as clearly, unintelligence is not what most people believe—the same thing as intelligence only less of it. It is an entirely different set of attitudes.

Bright and dull children, then, are very different. The bright child is curious about life and eager to get involved in it. There is no wall[C] between him and life. The dull child, however, is less interested in the real world, more inclined to live in worlds of fantasy.[D] The bright child likes to experiment, to try things out. If he can't do something one way, he'll try another.[4] However, the dull child is usually afraid to try at all. If he does try and then fails, he gives up.

The bright child is patient. He can tolerate uncertainty and failure, and will keep trying until he gets an answer. When all his experiments fail, he can even admit to himself that for the time being he is not going to get an answer. This[5] may annoy him, but he can wait. Very often he does not want to be told how to do the problem or solve the puzzle he has struggled with,

[1] What things?

[2] Refers to?

[3] Roots of what?

[4] Another what?

[5] Refers to?

[A] Can you give an example of a problematic situation?

[B] What kind of feeling?

[C] What kind of "wall"?

[D] What is meant by "worlds of fantasy"?

[6]Alternative word?

[7]Refers to?

since[6] this would deprive him of the chance of working it[7] out for himself at a later attempt. However, the dull child cannot stand uncertainty or failure. To him, an unanswered question is not a challenge or an opportunity, but a threat.[8] If he can't work out the answer quickly, it must be given to him.

[8]Why is it a "threat"?

The bright child is willing to go ahead on the basis of incomplete information and understanding. In other words, he will take risks. To give an example, he will often read a book he does not immediately understand in the hope that he will gradually collect enough information to make it[9] meaningful. However, the dull child will only go ahead when he knows exactly what to expect. He also needs total comprehension[10] of whatever he's experiencing.

[9]Refers to?

[10]Alternative word?

For the dull child, then, the world we live in is senseless, unpredictable, and worrying. He feels that he can never tell what may happen, particularly[11] in a new situation, except that it will most probably be bad.[12] The bright child, however, feels the world to be a reasonable, fascinating, and comfortable place.

[11]Synonym?

[12]Why does he have such negative feelings about life?

Adapted from *How Children Fail* by John Holt, Pelican Books, 1974 (pp. 163–64).

D. Understanding the Text

Directions: Complete the following sentences with relation to the text.

1. The way a person faces a problem shows _____

_____

2. Faced with a difficult problem, the dull will _____

_____

3. The ability to experiment is _____

_____

4. The bright child doesn't like to be told the solution to problems because _____

_____

5. If a dull child has not got enough information to answer a question, _____

_____

6. A good title for the text would be: _____

_____

E. Information Transfer

Directions: Can you complete the following table of the main characteristics of "bright" and "dull" children?

Major Behavioral Characteristics

Bright Child	Dull Child
1. Curious	1. Uninterested in life
2.	2. Inclined to fantasy
3.	3.
4.	4.

F. The Function of Sentences

When we need to indicate that a sentence contrasts sharply with what has already been stated, we can use the marker *however*. Here is an example from the text:

If [the bright child] can't do something one way, he'll try another. However, the dull child is usually afraid to try at all.

The second sentence, then, functions as a contrastive statement. The marker *however* alerts us to the sentence's function.

Directions: Now write statements that would contrast with these sentences:

1. A bright child will experiment with different methods of solving a problem. However, _____

_____

2. Success in exams is important. However, _____

_____

3. I don't think I'll be able to play. However, _____

_____

4. Teaching is not as well paid as jobs in commerce and industry. However, _____

_____

5. You may not understand every word in a passage. However, _____

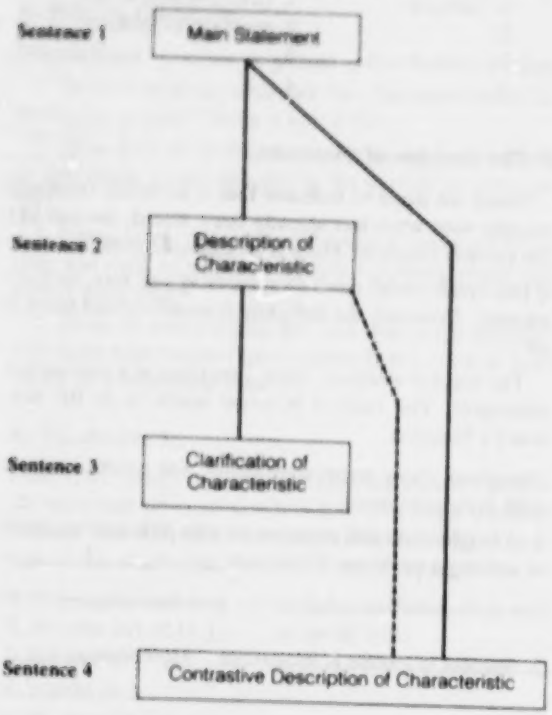
_____

G. Paragraph Structure

In writing about educational topics we often need to describe the characteristics of a process, group, person, etc. In the text we read, the characteristics were described for contrastive purposes. Look at the following sentences of a paragraph:

(1) Bright and dull children are very different. (2) The bright child is curious about life and eager to get involved in it. (3) In other words, there is no wall between him and life. (4) However, the dull child is inclined to live in an unreal, fantasy world.

If we look at the function of each individual sentence within the paragraph, we can represent the paragraph structure diagrammatically like this:



Looking at the function of these sentences, we see that sentence (1) is a statement rather than an assertion, since the passage is based on widely accepted beliefs. Sentence (2) describes a major trait of bright children, and sentence (3) goes on to clarify its importance. Finally, sentence (4) describes a trait of dull children that contrasts with the one about bright children. Notice how all the sentences support the main statement.

Directions: Now see if you can order the following sentences and write them out as a paragraph. Use sentence markers where appropriate. Do not number the sentences.

The poor teacher will not take into account the special needs of the students.
He cares about his students.
The good teacher will adapt his teaching techniques in line with the special needs of the group.
There are enormous differences between the approaches of good and poor teachers.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Directions: Now complete the following paragraph. Try to follow the paragraph structure above as far as possible.

There are many differences between college and school teaching. In college the teacher is dealing with students who have made a conscious decision to continue studying. _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

H. Vocabulary 2

Directions: The following words all have letters missing. See if you can complete the words.

1. b_h_v_or
2. p_rs_n_l_t_
3. _f_ _ct_v_
4. f_ _db_ck
5. s_i_l
6. _x_er_m_n_
7. f_ _l_re
8. d_p_i_e
9. p_r_i_ _l_r_y
10. t_l_r_t_
11. _u_z_e
12. t_r_ _t

I. Grammar Review

Adverbial clauses can often be replaced by gerund phrases. Here is an example from the text:

The intelligent person, meeting a new situation, opens himself up to it.

This could be rewritten with a full adverbial clause:

When an intelligent person meets a new situation, he opens himself up to it.

Directions: Now rewrite the following sentences, using gerund phrases. Make any other changes in sentence stucture that you consider necessary.

1. When I realized that the class was not going to listen, I left the room.

_____

_____

2. When the student saw that the question was difficult, he turned to his friend for help.

_____

_____

3. When the students found out that the teacher was a great tennis player, they paid much more attention in his classes.

_____

_____

Directions: Now see if you can complete the following sentences:

1. Not knowing what to say, _____

_____

2. The dull child, realizing he was incapable of answering the question himself, _____

_____

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Teaching Literature of the United States

continued from page 8

reading literature in English is bound to become not the chore it was for me in French, but instead the pleasure literature is meant to be.

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Successful EFL Classes in a Traditional Learning Environment

CHRISTINE S. ALVARADO
University of Panama in Chiriqui

CHRISTINE S. ALVARADO has been a full-time instructor in the English department at the Chiriqui Center of the University of Panama since 1981. At the Center she teaches methodology and supervises student teachers. She has also taught in Mexico and elsewhere in Panama since 1970, with the exception of two years in the United States, where she earned an M.A. from the University of South Florida. Her work has included teaching EFL, ESP, Spanish, and French in both public and private schools and universities. Ms. Alvarado has published articles in *TESOL Newsletter* and *English Teaching Forum*.

What makes an EFL class successful? For that matter, what is a successful EFL class? And what criteria do we use to judge a class successful?

The question is deceptively simple. One way to answer is to determine how well the class achieves the objectives set for it. However, even if the objectives are all reached, we have to examine the objectives themselves. Behavioral objectives, for example, may be helpful in planning and teaching, but achieving the objectives does not in itself assure that a class is effective (Tumposky 1984).

Another way to judge a class, often used by both supervisors and methods instructors, is by means of a checklist. This is an analytic approach in which individual aspects such as volume of voice, clarity of instructions, and even appropriate dress are graded separately, then averaged for a total grade. Again, there remain questions about the items themselves, especially how they are weighted. As anyone who has used this method knows, the sum of the parts does not always add up to an accurate evaluation of the class as a whole.

So far we have seen that neither attainment of objectives nor itemized checklists will necessarily indicate whether or not a class is successful, much less the characteristics that make it so. But what about methodology? Can we not assume that classes taught with a particular method will be successful?

The claims for some methods are quite strong (see Lozanov 1982). Yet we have only to return to the heyday of audiolingualism to put these claims into perspective. Like several more recent methods, audiolingualism was firmly based on theory (a general theory of learning) and was supported by prominent people in our field. Yet today, this method is widely considered ineffective. This is not to say that all methods are the same; the point is rather that despite all claims, the research available so far has not indicated which method is best (Blair 1982, Richards 1984). This may be in part because the method is only one cluster of variables that influence a class.

If method alone cannot assure a successful class, less so can technique. Professional publications are replete with successful teaching techniques, especially communicative activities. Yet rarely is it explained how these activities combine with others to constitute an entire class. If, on the other hand, communicative activities alone make up the total class, they are suspected of promoting fossilization and pidginization. Unfortunately, there is little empirical evidence either way (Richards 1984).

Observing and describing successful classes

The result takes us back to our original question. But perhaps the best way to find out about successful classes is to go to the classes themselves. By observing many different classes, we will be able to isolate the ones that

are outstanding. The second step is to describe what these classes have in common. This involves intuitive, subjective judgment that will not be as precise or reliable as formal research. But it can give us a valuable perspective. Far from constituting an answer, this may serve as a question for future research.

Perhaps more EFL teachers should observe other classes and describe those features, including activities and combinations of activities, that seem to enhance language learning. Research could tell us if in fact this is so, and theory could tell us why.

In this article I am going to describe the characteristics of several successful classes I observed and tentatively explain why. First, however, since the features contributing to a successful class in one set of circumstances may be woefully lacking in another, it is important to know something about the four clusters of variables that influenced these classes: the student, the teacher, the method, and the learning environment.

The classes observed took place in public secondary schools in the westernmost province of the Republic of Panama. In these schools all students, 35 to 45 per classroom, studied EFL four or five hours a week as part of the regular curriculum. The students as well as the instructors, university students doing their practice teaching, were native speakers of Spanish in an (English) acquisition-poor environment. Consequently, the teacher had to provide for all of the motivation and language-learning/acquisition opportunities inside the classroom. The methods they used were both traditional (audiolingual, cognitive-code) and innovative (communicative, notional-functional), often combined within the same class period.

Characteristics of successful classes

Of all the classes observed, several were truly impressive. What made them so? What characteristics did the classes have in common? How did these characteristics contribute to the success of the classes?

First of all, the successful classes had many features in common with good classes everywhere. The teacher maintained control without dominating the class. This permitted more innovative activities and therefore more, not less, freedom for students and teachers alike. Another important effect was a relatively tension-free atmosphere conducive to learning.

Control was aided by the effective use of nonverbal communication: whole-body movements, gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact. Even more important was the teachers' paralanguage—aspects of voice such as tone, pitch, volume, and intonation.

The effective use of nonverbal communication also facilitated a second aspect of these classes: the active participation of all students throughout the class period. A special effort was made for the often neglected areas in the back and sides of the classroom. Teachers included these students not only by calling on them frequently, but also by speaking in a clear, audible voice and by establishing eye contact with students in all parts of the room. Teachers also moved into the rows, thus eliminating the *front* and *back* of the room altogether.

There were, of course, many more aspects that characterized these classes and probably successful classes everywhere. Calling students by name and respecting them as individuals were two others. However, there were also several features common to good EFL classes in particular. Of these, the most important was variety.

All of the successful classes consisted of a variety of short activities—four to six within a 45-minute period. Yet this was not confusing since most of the activities centered around the same teaching point, whether a grammatical structure, a notion, or a function of language. But instead of discussing each class, I will list some of the activities appropriate for three typical classes focusing on one traditional teaching point: the use of *will* for future time reference. Then I will discuss how the selection and combination of activities contributed to the success of the classes.

Activities in Class One

1. A short paragraph with instances of *will* underlined for emphasis. First the teacher, then the students read the paragraph.
2. A short true/false listening-comprehension exercise on the paragraph. Students answer orally.
3. Dictation of three or four questions on the reading. All students write the questions and answers, then volunteers copy them on the board. The teacher and students may make corrections at the board.
4. A short pronunciation drill contrasting /w/ and /gw/ (easily confused by native speakers of Spanish).
5. A small-group speaking activity. The teacher describes a child as s/he appears in a picture. Then students in small groups describe what they imagine the child will become as an adult. The teacher may write two or three questions on the board to guide the students.
6. A class speaking activity. A member of each group explains to the class the group's idea of the child's future as prepared in activity 5 above. Students and teacher discuss similarities and differences in the responses.

Activities in Class Two (not necessarily the following class)

1. A short dialogue with *will* in negative and interrogative sentences. The teacher, then the students read the dialogue aloud.
2. A grammar demonstration on felt board contrasting *will* in affirmative, declarative sentences with negative and interrogative forms.
3. Short choral repetition or individual transformation drills for negative and interrogative sentences with *will*.

4. A dyadic speaking activity. The teacher describes an activity of the future such as vacationing in space or using robots at home. Each dyad writes a short dialogue for two imaginary characters engaged in the activity.

5. A class speaking activity. Presentation of the dialogues to the class by volunteer dyads.

Activities in Class Three

1. Class speaking activity using a large picture or drawing with several people of different ages. Students comment on what will become of each person in the future.

2. Student-to-teacher dictation of a paragraph about one of the persons in the picture. The teacher writes the paragraph on the board, making suggestions and adjustments as needed. Students copy their paragraph in notebooks.

3. A listening-comprehension and pronunciation drill on /w/ and /gw/.

4. A writing activity. Each student writes a paragraph about personal plans for study, work, or travel in the future.

5. An individual speaking activity. Students present an informal, oral summary of their personal plans for the future to the rest of the class.

Common features of the classes

The above activities and many others were combined in a variety of ways that seemed to contribute to the success of the classes.

First of all, the classes were composed of several short activities instead of one or two long ones, and this helped hold students' attention. And since all of the activities focused on a single teaching point, they allowed students to approach the problem from many angles and through the four basic skills. This is important, not only because different students have different learning styles, but because each individual may learn in a variety of ways.

Besides the number, the types of activities also helped provide for differences both between and within individual students. Some activities were mechanical, while others were creative. This meant that all students, including the most proficient, were challenged to develop their language skills to the fullest.

The mechanical drills, especially the choral drills, also played an important, though limited, role in the classroom. First, they gave students oral practice with new structures. Although certainly not emphasized in recent methods, practicing sounds and structures may play a small part in learning or acquiring a language, even a native language (Clark and Clark 1977). Second, the choral drills helped pull students together as a working unit. This recaptured the students' attention and thereby facilitated transitions between other more creative and demanding activities.

Drills were not the only traditional techniques used. In these classes, grammar was explicitly taught and errors corrected. However, instead of listing rules, the teacher demonstrated concepts on a felt board and asked students to formulate the rules. The students then applied the rules to a written exercise, often a homework assignment. Here, and only here, were errors corrected.

With this treatment of grammar, students participated actively by analyzing examples and putting their generalizations into words. They also made a concentrated effort to monitor their language by consciously applying rules and correcting errors (Krashen 1982), but only for the duration of the activity. When the class shifted to another activity, students were encouraged to use language unselfconsciously.

But the grammar demonstration may have been successful for another, unexpected reason. If we think of all the activities that normally take place in a classroom for any subject, a demonstration at the board along with student participation may be, paradoxically, the most natural of all the activities described so far.

A final feature the classes had in common was the use of teaching aids. All the teachers observed included some type of realia—pictures, drawings, or felt-board cutouts—as an integral part of at least one activity. The aids were useful in several ways. For grammar, they allowed teachers to demonstrate complex concepts, thus avoiding long explanations in either language. For creative activities, the pictures provided scenes to describe and topics to discuss. These pictures often served as a springboard for the students' final development of topics according to their own personal experiences. Moreover, visual aids, recordings, songs, and games of all types helped maintain student interest. And, in a traditional EFL learning environment, this in itself is a valuable contribution to the class.

Finding the best combination

In the eighties, no teacher would base a class exclusively on drills or grammar explanations, or even a combination of the two. Communicative activities are here to stay, and rightfully so. In acquisition-poor learning environments, they may provide the only opportunity for students to make active use of English. However, it is also true that in these environments the only language input for students comes from the teacher, the materials, and the students themselves. Unfortunately, the language input of peers in communicative activities may be very faulty, and there is no natural English input from the community to counterbalance it.

Therefore, a limited use of old-fashioned techniques such as drills, grammar explanation, and correction of errors may still contribute to learning if combined with more modern communicative activities.

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Realism, Reality, and Quasi-Reality in the Language Classroom

MADELEINE FERRAR
Beaumont Leys School, Leicester

MADELEINE FERRAR teaches in the ESL department, Beaumont Leys School, Leicester. She has also taught at the Lycee Imam El Ghazali, Laghouat, Algeria, where this article was written as a result of her observation that "students' natural curiosity is an untapped resource that should be more fully exploited in the classroom." Ms. Ferrar received a B.A. in linguistics from the University of London in 1982, and obtained a Postgraduate Certificate of Education from the University of Leicester in 1983.

The distinction is sometimes made between real and realistic use of language (Pearse 1983). Language is said to be *real* when it is used to say something, *realistic* when something is said to use language. Pearse illustrates the difference between the two uses: in the first case you ask the time because you really want to know what the time is (you have a dental appointment, for example); in the second, you ask the time because telling the time is today's topic, and as a teacher you are checking that your students have learned the appropriate response. In the former, in other words, the situation is real; in the latter, it is contrived. Most language use in the classroom tends to be, at most, realistic—it *reflects* real-life communication; while outside the classroom, language use is real—it just *is* real-life communication.

The real/realistic distinction is an important one for the teacher. In spite of the limitations of the classroom context, she must try to create opportunities for real language use, so that her students are able to make the progression from the contrived language of the classroom, however realistic, i.e., contextualized, that language might be, to the real language of the street.

In my teaching I have found that there is a more immediate advantage to the introduction of real, or quasi-real, language in the classroom: namely, that it leads to greater student involvement, more active participation, and, arguably, more effective learning. In this article, I shall explain why this is the case, and offer some suggestions for improving the quality of classroom interaction.

In order to understand *why* real-language use is such a strong motivating force, it is necessary to consider exactly *how* real-life interaction differs from most classroom interaction. It was mentioned above that in real life, language is used to say something (i.e., it is a means of expression), while in the classroom, something is said to use language (i.e., it is an end in itself). In other words, the language is real if, and only if, the motivation, the reason for speaking, is real too. This is the psychological difference between the two uses. But what of the linguistic difference? The answer to this question lies within the field of pragmatics, the study of utterance interpretation.

One of the central questions in pragmatic theory is understanding how successful communication is possible. In Gricean pragmatics, conversation is seen as a cooperative activity—speakers understand one another because they obey certain conversational rules, called "maxims of conversation." Grice has identified several maxims, but it is the maxim of quantity—"be informative"—that seems particularly relevant to language teaching, simply because it is this maxim that is most often violated in the classroom.

> The maxims of quantity. (*a*) The contribution should be as informative as is required for the purposes of the exchange. (*b*) The contribution should not be more informative than is required. (Grice 1967)

What Grice is saying, then, is that people speak to each other in order to get some information across—to influence each other in some way. If no information is conveyed, because the utterance is linguistically deviant, or if the speaker deliberately transmits information that the hearer already knows, communication breaks down. This might seem obvious, but when you think about it, many classroom practices deny students the opportunity to be informative, i.e., communicative, in this sense. By undermining this basic motivating force, the teacher destroys that which she is trying to achieve, namely, meaningful discourse in the target language.

Consider, for example, the following attested exchanges:

Teacher: Fatima! What's your name?
Fatima: My name is Fatima.

Teacher: (pointing to a book on the table) Omar! Where is the book?
Omar: The book is between the pencil and the eraser.

Time and again students are called upon to perform linguistically in a way that is, at best, realistic, at worst, as the above examples testify, abnormal.

By satisfying the linguistic and psychological criteria of real-life discourse, classroom intercourse can, however, come closer to the real thing. I should make it clear that I am not arguing for the exclusion of all activities that do not meet these requirements. I am merely trying to underline the distinction between an exercise that merely practices the language and one that enables the students to practice the language and say something as well. The following examples of familiar activities in a beginners class illustrate this difference.

Language Function	Language Forms/Vocabulary	Classroom Activities	
		A	B
1. describing (people)	Pres. simple/Pres. continuous *X has blue eyes and brown hair. She is 18 years old.* *She is wearing ...*	Student X describes student Y, either orally or in writing.	Students describe a close relative or friend—someone unknown to the rest of the class.
2. describing (people)	Definite and indefinite articles Kinship terms/Occupations *I have two brothers and one sister. My uncle lives in ...* *My father is a ...* *This is my sister-in-law, the ...*	Listening or reading comprehension. From text describing fictitious family of two, three, or more generations, students construct family tree.	Teacher uses description of own family for comprehension (can be illustrated with photographs, maps, postcards, etc.). Follow-up: students describe their family in the same way.
3. narrating	Tenses Use of sequencers Complex sentences	Picture story. From sequence of pictures which tell a story, students put story into words.	Teacher tells students a *true* story (weekend/holiday activities, nightmare, etc.) which can be used as model for students' own true stories on same topic.
4. giving instructions	Imperative	How to make a call from a public telephone booth. Instructions are presented in jumbled order and students rearrange instructions into correct order.	Teacher brings ingredients and utensils (and a Primus stove if possible) to class for the preparation of a simple recipe. Instructions are given orally while food is prepared and then in written form (blackboard, OHP, handout). Follow-up: students give instructions for the preparation of a simple dish—preferably one that is special to their family, region, or country.
5. expressing obligation	Modal auxiliaries *must/have to* *mustn't/can't* *don't have to* etc.	Flash cards depicting road signs used to elicit appropriate responses. *You mustn't go faster than ...* *You have to turn right.* etc.	Students describe their religious and/or cultural obligations. *Muslims must face Mecca when they pray.* *We can't eat pork.* etc.

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Developing Aural Anticipation and Prediction Strategies

NOEL R. WATTS
Massey University, Palmerston North
New Zealand

NOEL WATTS is a senior lecturer in the linguistics and second-language-teaching section of Massey University, where he lectures on language-teaching methodology in a postgraduate program for ESL/EFL teachers. He has also taught English in France, and has been an English-language consultant in the Philip[illegible]ies. Dr. Watts holds an M.A. from Auckland University, and both a Ph.D. and Diploma in Education from Massey University.

For many students for whom English is a second language, improvement in listening skills is a major priority. This is particularly true of students who come to study in New Zealand universities from countries where English has been taught as a foreign language with an emphasis on reading and writing. These students face considerable problems when they are required to take down information that is given orally in their lectures and seminars. Furthermore, the difficulties that they experience in following the flow of discussions limit their opportunities to make an active contribution in the informal tutorials and small-group activities that are an important part of university study at the advanced level.

Studies of how people process and interpret speech suggest that the key factor in comprehension is the ability to make intelligent guesses as to what will come next. According to Fry (1977:75), "Prediction is one of the most powerful factors in the reception of speech. We should get nowhere at all if we did not know to some extent what to expect." In similar vein, Rivers (1980:17) points out that: "In comprehending oral messages . . . we are not just extracting linguistic information, but we are selecting and matching what we have selected against probable messages that we are anticipating."

It would seem that effective listeners are those who are able to select relevant information and not be sidetracked by unimportant details. By using anticipation and prediction strategies they are able to work out in advance what the speaker is likely to say, and, as a result, they know which parts of the message they need to concentrate on. For example, if the students were to hear a talk entitled "The State of the Country's Economy," they might expect that the speaker would provide various facts and figures to describe the present situation, perhaps make comparisons with other countries, and possibly also make certain suggestions as to future directions. As the talk progressed, the good listeners could make further predictions about what the speaker would say next and then listen carefully to what was actually said in order to confirm or reject predictions. In making these predictions the students would be drawing on their background knowledge of the topic and their experience of how talks on such themes are structured, as well as on their understanding of the language forms that are related to the subject area.

If anticipation and prediction are important in comprehending messages transmitted orally, then clearly, as Brown (1977), McKeating (1981), and Richards (1983) suggest, classroom activities need to be provided to assist students to develop this capacity to guess what will come next.

What kinds of exercises can be used to promote intelligent anticipation and prediction? The activities that

follow are divided into two main types: those that focus on prediction at the word or word-group level, and those that relate to prediction at the level of overall organization and development of the message.

Prediction of words or word groups

1. The teacher reads the beginning of a phrase or a sentence and asks the students to guess how it will end.

Examples:

The room had very little furniture: only a table, four chairs and a _____

Bob was feeling the cold, as all he was wearing was a shirt, a pair of trousers, and a _____

2. The students have to complete statements in a text that is read aloud to them.

Example:

COMPUTER-ASSISTED INSTRUCTION

Generally, computer-assisted learning programs are designed to involve the student, who is required to respond to each step in the lesson before proceeding. Early programs tended only to inform the student whether his answers were right . . . (or wrong). Later improvements provided the student with an explanation when a wrong answer . . . (was given). Modern programs can assess the individual student's performance and adapt the lesson to his . . . (needs).

3. As a variation of Exercise 2 the students are given graphs or a set of statistics and must predict how the speaker will interpret them.

Example:

SMALLTOWN UNIVERSITY
SUMMARY OF ENROLLMENTS BY COLLEGES

	1983	1984
Agriculture	542	488
Arts and Letters	1148	1217
Commerce	813	923
Education	299	301
Science	950	976

Statements:

Compared with the corresponding figures for 1983 the total enrollment in the different colleges in 1984 showed an increase. The enrollments in Agriculture, however, . . . (declined). The largest growth in numbers occurred in . . . (Commerce). In Science the number of enrollments remained . . . (almost the same).

4. The students hear a sentence and then try to predict what the next one will be.

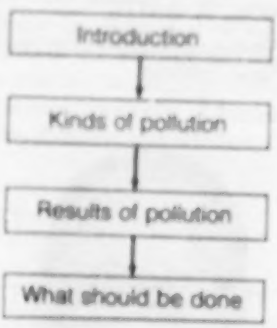
Examples:

There are many different kinds of media that keep people in touch with what is going on in the world. ____

If you are planning on going climbing in the mountains, there are certain things that you must do first. ____

Prediction at the discourse level

1. The students are given the title of an imaginary talk such as "The Problem of Pollution in Cities" and are then asked to suggest the ways in which this theme is likely to be developed. For example, the students could set out the possible lines of development of the theme in the form of a flow chart:



2. The teacher reads sections of a mystery story to the students, pausing between each section to ask the students to predict what will come next.

Examples:

(*a*) It could have been a cry or perhaps it was only the wind sighing in the trees around the derelict house. John and Tony looked at each other. Should they stop and investigate? But already it was past nine o'clock and quite dark. Their families would be waiting for them.

What do you think John and Tony will decide to do?

(*b*) The sound came again; too loud and prolonged to be the wind. "Come on," said Tony, pushing open the gate. "We'd better see what it is." Cautiously they crept up the steps to the house. On the right there was a window softly reflecting the moonlight. "Give me a lift," whispered Tony. "I'll try to see what's inside."

What will Tony see inside?

(*c*) Tony peered through the window. At first it was hard to see anything. Black shadows, cobwebs, a broken chair, a table leaning drunkenly against the wall . . . but something was moving . . . something was crawling slowly across the floor. Tony froze in horror. Could it be a . . . ?

What is it that frightens Tony?

3. As a variation to the open-ended questions given in the previous exercise the teacher could provide the students with a choice of possibilities at each stage.

e.g. What will John and Tony decide to do?

Choose *one* of the following and say why you think this will happen.

A

They will go on home.

B

They will go into the house by themselves.

C

They will call a policeman to investigate.

4. To focus on how linking words such as *because, however, so, therefore, also, but* introduce a REASON, a RESULT, a QUALIFICATION, etc., the teacher reads aloud a statement such as: Tomorrow I'm hoping to go to the beach, *but/because/and*. . . .
The students suggest likely completions.

but + Qualification — it will probably be wet / it depends on my work

because + Reason — the weather is so hot / I like swimming

and + Accompanying Idea — sunbathe on the sand / meet my friends there

5. The teacher shows the students a picture and gives a description of what is going on. The students then draw a picture to illustrate what would happen next.

6. The students hear a talk that gives opposing arguments on a topic. They then have to predict whether, in the final summing up, the speaker will take a position *for* or *against* the issue.

Example:

Smoking should be banned in all public places.

SECTION 1

Smoking has been shown to be dangerous to your health. Medical tests have brought conclusive evidence that smoking is linked with cancer and heart disease. Furthermore, smoking is a hazard not only to the smoker but to nonsmokers who have to endure the smoking of others near them.

In addition, cigarette smoke can be irritating to the eyes. Even the smell of cigarette smoke is unpleasant to the nonsmoker. For these reasons, many people would strongly urge that smoking should be banned in all public places and that this ban should be vigorously enforced.

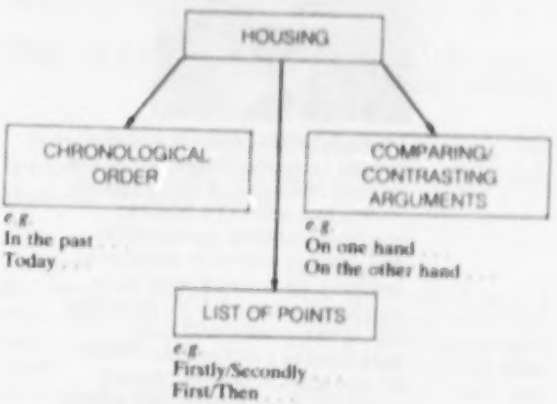
SECTION 2

Of course, the smokers claim that such a ban would infringe their basic rights. The argument is that the freedom of people to act in a way that suits them is a very important one. To ban smoking would be a retrograde step, as it would be one further blow to the freedom and liberty of the individual (even though in saying this the smokers appear to show little regard for the rights and freedoms of the nonsmokers who are forced to breathe in their smoke).

Will the conclusion be *for* or *against* a ban on smoking in public places?

What details in the presentation of the arguments have helped you to predict this outcome?

7. The students listen to part of a talk on a topic such as "Housing" and then have to choose an appropriate continuation or conclusion. For example, the subject of "Housing" may be developed in various ways following different organizational patterns:



Exercise:

The students indicate which of these statements fit in with the above patterns.

Next, there is the question of proximity to civic amenities.

So in years to come we are likely to see more people living in high-rise apartments as the pressure of space increases in cities.

But others might consider that it is better to use wood for housing, as it is cheaper.

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Ways to English: Some Remarks on Teaching Practical Grammar

TADEUSZ RYBOWSKI
University of Wrocław

TADEUSZ RYBOWSKI is a senior lecturer in applied linguistics at the Institute of English of the University of Wrocław, where he teaches practical grammar, composition, and creative writing. In addition to teaching, he is also interested in translating contemporary American and British poetry, and has published two anthologies: *Wśród amerykańskich poetów* (*Among American Poets*), 1972, and *Wśród angielskich poetów* (*Among English Poets*), 1974. Mr. Rybowski is now working on translations of the poetry of Kenneth Rexroth and W. S. Merwin.

It has long been observed how difficult it is to teach practical grammar to foreign students. Teachers have long striven to devise methods of teaching grammar that would be both effective and attractive to learners. Can these two elements be successfully combined? Does not pedantic care in teaching a foreign language exclude pleasure? Can any language be taught instinctively, intuitively, without tiring and often boring language drills? These are but a few questions that arise whenever we start thinking of teaching practical grammar to foreign students.

First of all, let's try to define the notion of practical grammar. What does it really mean to teach practical grammar? For me, practical grammar is by no means a set of rules to be applied when speaking; it is, rather, the ability to produce utterances that exemplify these rules. The correct and conscious use of the language is thus not a result of studying the rules, though this can also be of some use, but the ability to conform to grammar rules while speaking a foreign tongue. Thus, for example, if a student is able to say the sentence "I should very much like to visit England this year, but I don't know if I shall get a visa," we may assume that he will be able to make dozens of similar sentences, such as "I should very much like to buy a new car this month, but I don't know if I shall be able to get rid of the old one" or "I should very much like to get in touch with Mr. Jones during my stay in London, but I doubt if I shall find enough time," etc. All these sentences represent a certain rigid structure that can be easily reproduced in hundreds of sentences provided the student has mastered the structure.

How can the basic structures in English be mastered? Can this be done by mechanical repetition of a given structure in class, or should we try to achieve mastery of the structure by reference to the rules in grammar handbooks? In other words, should the learner first try to learn a grammar rule and then use this rule in his spoken utterance, or should he endeavor to speak correctly without realizing that he is conforming to the rules?

It is my firm belief that the only way to achieve both fluency and correct usage in speaking a foreign tongue is by repetition of a given structure no matter how tiresome and dull this may seem. A student must know for certain that he speaks correct and good English. Once he is sure of his structures, he will use them willingly and unhesitatingly. His language will become disciplined. He will become aware of his mistakes and may be able to correct them. Finally, he will choose the proper structure to express himself.

Learning by analogy

The way to good English is long and arduous. Only children are blessed with the ability to learn a language without much effort; they often astonish their parents by their linguistic skills. How often foreigners envy En-

glish children the ease with which they use their native tongue, while foreign adult learners must strain their memory and intelligence to express their views and ideas or to simply communicate with the English.

Children learn a language by analogy. They listen to adults and try to produce their own sentences, frequently distorting what they heard, which makes them so amusing and dear. In fact, it can be said that every child develops at a certain stage in its life its own peculiar language with highly individual features. Only much later do they begin to learn the language consciously, acquiring rules of grammar, pronunciation, and spelling.

Can adult learners of English be taught, like children, by analogy without reference to grammar handbooks? Is it possible to devise a course of practical grammar that will enable the learner to acquire practical linguistic skills in English in a way similar to that of a child? It is possible, but such a course must be well planned and rigorously executed.

It has been said that children are exposed to sentence structures uttered by adults and that they learn these structures by analogy. Consequently, it is necessary to select the structures for adult learners that will be most productive, i.e., that will enable the learner to make hundreds of sentences similar to those produced by the teacher. In order to ensure efficiency in the learning process, the teacher must decide which structures are to be taught in class and which he can do without.

Choosing useful structures

In my long experience as a teacher, I have noticed that the most productive structures are those that belong to the verbal group. In consequence, I have decided to include in my course English tenses, reported speech, gerunds, passive voice, relative sentences, unreal past, indirect questions, conditional and temporal sentences, and sequence of tenses.

I use two handbooks in my classes: *Living English Structure*, by W. S. Allen, and *Developing Skills*, by L. G. Alexander. These two books are but a point of departure. I use the first for teaching structures, while the second serves as the source of verbs. I make up sentences for the students to repeat, transform, and restructure. In fact, I have become their handbook.

In teaching practical grammar it is essential to involve the students in some sort of mental exercise. Learning a foreign language is always an adventure. Teaching practical grammar can also be made an adventure, provided the teacher is ingenious and the students responsive and cooperative.

Ordering the structures

Once the structures have been chosen, one should decide which structures should be taught first. I think that the course in practical grammar should begin with the TENSES combined with REPORTED SPEECH. All the tenses should be introduced and practiced, including those less frequently encountered in spoken English (e.g., future perfect continuous). The students should avoid using personal pronouns (*I, he, she, they*); instead, proper names should be used (*Mrs. Jackson, Jack, my English friend, my cousin*, etc.). Otherwise, the reported-speech sentences will sound anonymous, even meaningless. As this type of exercise can become monotonous and tiresome, it is essential to occasionally introduce other structures to relieve the monotony. Passive voice or the sequence of tenses seem a likely choice (*I was told that Peter would be coming soon*).

TABLE 1

Teacher:	*Student:*
What are you going to do now?	Jack asked me what I was going to do then.
Who does this car belong to?	Mrs. Jackson wanted to know who that car belonged to.
Jack will be coming soon.	I was told that Jack would be coming soon.
I know that he will come.	Mary told me that she knew Peter would come.
Aren't you hungry?	Martin asked me if I wasn't hungry.
When will you be back?	Mrs. Brown was anxious to know when I should be back.

It is possible to report a series of sentences. The teacher says several sentences and the student puts them into reported speech.

TABLE 2

Teacher:	*Student:*
Do you speak English?	Mrs. Smith asked me if I spoke English. She wanted to know how long ago I had started learning that language. She also was anxious to know how many English teachers I had had. She inquired if I liked that language. She asked me if I could imagine myself being a teacher of English in the future and I replied that I could, adding that I had always wanted to teach English.
How long ago did you start learning this language?	
How many English teachers have you had?	
Do you like this language?	
Can you imagine yourself being a teacher of English in the future?	
Yes, I can.	
I have always wanted to teach English.	

Once reported speech and all the tenses have been well practiced, one can proceed to CONDITIONAL AND TEMPORAL SENTENCES. It is desirable that these two structures be taught in connection with reported speech. This is particularly important with regard to temporal sentences where the past form is used to express the notion of futurity (*He told me that he would contact me as soon as he arrived in London.*).

TABLE 3

Teacher:	*Student:*
What will you do if he does not come?	Mary told me that she didn't know what she would do if Peter didn't come.
I shall get in touch with you when I have more time.	Mr. Smith promised that he would get in touch with me when he had more time.
Let me know as soon as he comes.	Jack asked me to let him know as soon as Mary came.
I shall phone you as soon as I arrive in London.	Susan promised to phone me as soon as she arrived in London.

Several classes should be devoted to teaching the GERUND. This structure is so typically English that many foreign students find it difficult to master. While some structures are more or less universal, i.e., they can be translated literally from one language into another, the gerund is practically untranslatable. Whereas certain structures in Polish can be almost mechanically rendered into English ("nie wiem, jak to zrobić"—*I do not know how to do it*), with the gerund this is not so. All the gerund sentences in English become much longer when rendered into Polish (*I cannot imagine myself teaching English*—"Nie mogę sobie wyobrazić, abym kiedyś uczyła angielskiego"). A special stress should be laid on memorizing the verbs followed by a gerund, which can be done only by repeating hundreds of sentences with these verbs. Again, reported speech can be introduced to assist the student in making long sentences.

TABLE 4

Teacher:	*Student:*
I cannot imagine myself being married early.	Betty told me that she could not imagine herself being married early.
Why do you insist on my inviting Peter?	John asked me why I insisted on his inviting Peter.
I hope that my parents will not object to my marrying you.	My girlfriend told me that she hoped that her parents would not object to her marrying me.
I shall never agree to your leaving Wrocław.	My father told me that he would never agree to my leaving Wrocław.
I have often considered leaving father.	Mother admitted that she had often considered leaving father.

Teaching the UNREAL PAST requires a different method. The teacher makes a sentence using the unreal past, and a student repeats it, adding something of his own. This structure, not very frequent in spoken English, is important because it differs from the Polish structure.

TABLE 5

Teacher:	*Student:*
Don't you wish you were English?	Don't you wish you were English / Polish / younger / older / me / a woman, etc.
It's high time you stopped smoking.	It's high time you stopped smoking / drinking / worrying / seeing Jack, etc.
You look as if you were ill.	You look as if you were ill / tired / exhausted / worried about something, etc.
It's a pity you cannot drive.	I wish you could drive / cook / speak English, etc.

The INFINITIVE requires extensive and varied exercises. Not many students realize how often infinitives replace tensed verbs in English or even a whole clause. Again, the teacher should devise a whole set of examples to make the students realize all the possibilities offered by the infinitive.

TABLE 6

Teacher:	*Student:*
Mary seems to be working.	It seems that Mary is working.
George is reported to have left for France.	It is reported that George has left for France.
Mrs. Jackson is said to have been working in this office for 20 years.	It is said that Mrs. Jackson has been working in this office for 20 years.
I don't know what to do now.	I wish I knew what I should do now.
This house is to be sold next month.	I expect to sell this house next month.
Jack must have been in Wrocław before.	I am sure that Jack has been in Wrocław before.
John may have gone home.	I suppose that John has gone home.

PASSIVE-VOICE structures can be taught in connection with the infinitive. In fact, some of the examples from Table 6 partly illustrate the use of the passive voice. It should be stressed that the passive voice is much more frequent in English than it is in other languages, and that this structure is by no means rare even in spoken English.

A special stress should be laid on the types of passive voice that are most likely to be found in formal written English. The structure with the *by* agent can be omitted altogether.

TABLE 7

Teacher:	*Student:*
Have they paid for lunch yet?	Has lunch been paid for yet?
It is reported that he has left for home.	Mr. Jackson is reported to have left for home.

They say English grammar is difficult.	English grammar is said to be difficult.
They made him learn English.	He was made to learn English.
I hate it when they tell me what I should do.	I hate being told what I should do.
They told me that I should stay at home.	I was told to stay at home.

RELATIVE SENTENCES are difficult to practice orally. Though infrequent in spoken English, they occur in formal written English. It is possible to devise some kinds of oral practice for them, but as they seem rather unattractive, it is better to stick to the handbook.

TABLE 8

Teacher:	*Student:*
I have a sister. She lives in New York.	I have a sister who lives in New York.
George passed his examinations with honor, and this made his parents very proud of him.	George passed his examinations with honor, which made his parents very proud of him.
The matter has been settled. You were arguing about it last night.	The matter you were arguing about last night has been settled.

Expanding vocabulary

Once the basic structures have been practiced, there comes a stage of enriching the students' vocabulary. The students should be made to fill out the structures with new verbs. The verbs can be taken either from *Developing Skills* or from any other handbook for advanced students, or even from novels, plays, newspapers, etc. It is advisable that phrasal verbs be introduced at this stage (*get up, pull out, call on,* etc.). Such common verbs as *write, speak, hear, learn,* etc., should be avoided.

The process of learning new words is very long, since the learners are used to certain verbs most familiar to them and only reluctantly acquire new verbs.

In the third stage of learning, the students should be able to manipulate the language at will. They should be able to make dozens of sentences from one core structure. Consequently, they should make a whole string of sentences out of a simple one. Thus a simple structure *I learn/teach English* would become: "I wish I could learn English," "I should learn English if I were you," "You should have learned English long ago," "I hope my parents will not object to my teaching English in the future," "Mrs. Jackson promised that she would teach me some English when I came to London," "I wonder if I shall ever learn English," "By Christmas I shall have been learning English for six years," etc.

Being able to produce dozens of structures out of one core structure, and knowing hundreds of verbs, the students begin to speak the language in a fully conscious and elaborate way. In other words, they begin to speak in complete sentences and to choose the appropriate structures to express what they wish to say. At this stage they begin to enjoy using the language, being able to use many structures and choosing their own manner of expression.

Thus after long hours of exposure to English structures, the students start speaking English as if it were their own language. By now they will have separated themselves from the structures of their native tongue and ceased translating their ideas into a target language. Interference from their own language is largely gone.

Advantages and disadvantages

Has the method of teaching a language by exposure to basic structures any disadvantages? Of course it has. It also has many advantages. Let us now examine both the advantages and disadvantages of this method.

1. The first obvious advantage is that students actually speak the language, repeating the structures produced by the teacher, restructuring them, filling them out with new verbs, and finally choosing structures to express themselves.

2. The teacher knows what his students have learned. On the strength of his observations in class, he is able to assess their linguistic skills. In consequence, there are fewer unpleasant surprises at the examination. With this method one can predict more or less accurately what the student has learned and what he has not yet mastered.

3. With well-trained students there is a chance that they will start enjoying the use of the language for its own sake. Thus, in addition to the usual motivation of speaking in order to communicate, there will appear another motive—that of pleasure derived from the process of speaking.

4. More ambitious students will discover that it is possible to express themselves in many different ways. They may start deliberately complicating their utterances, trying to enrich their way of speaking. Instead of saying something in a simple and easy way, they will use long and elaborate sentences.

Every teaching method has its disadvantages. The method discussed here is not devoid of them. What are the principal disadvantages of language drills?

1. After an intensive language drill it is possible that the students will become so absorbed in the drill that they may forget what they are actually saying. The form will prevail over the content. In consequence, the language will cease being a means of communication and will become a set of structures to be used when saying something. It may eventually become an abstract notion far removed from everyday life situations, a set of structures and sounds and not a vehicle for conversation.

2. The English taught with the help of language drills may often sound bookish, formal, even artificial. Speaking in complete sentences would sound ridiculous in everyday conversation. Therefore, the students should occasionally be allowed to use the language intuitively and to depart from the rules.

This method requires a lot of mental effort on the part of the teacher, who must provide his students with hundreds of sentences. He must have the will and natural inclination to perform language drills. It does take a lot of time and considerable effort to involve the students in the process of making sentences. There is always the danger that the participants in the drill will become so bored with the exercise that the lesson will become a monotonous nightmare. Therefore the lesson should never exceed 45 minutes. Otherwise the fatigue of both the teacher and the learners can be so overpowering that the students may cease to draw any profit from the drill.

It should be added that the method of teaching a language by exposure to the structures cannot be applied to secondary-school students. It is, rather, recommended for students of English at the university level. In our English department the students have, in addition to classes in practical grammar, classes in writing, conversation, and phonetics. Language drills are therefore but a part of a general language course. In secondary schools, where the teacher is expected to teach everything, this method can hardly be used. ■

Realism, Reality, and Quasi-Reality

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It can be seen that the activities in Column B have one thing in common: while practicing the same language functions as their counterparts in Column A, they give the students a reason for speaking, by enabling them to tell the teacher and the rest of the class something they don't already know. Because of this, the communication generated by these activities is closer to real-life discourse than those in Column A, which merely practice the language.

Critics might argue that the activities in Column A should be used to teach the language forms, while those in Column B can be used to practice these forms—that students have to learn the language before they can begin to use it. This criticism is based on the mistaken assumption that the learning process consists of two discrete stages: learning and practice. It is my view that things are not so clear cut. One can learn a language only by using it, and our students' use of the target language is the only way of evaluating the effectiveness of our teaching. Moreover, the ability to select activities that exploit the students' desire to communicate is essential in language teaching. As a result, learning becomes both easier and more enjoyable.

Finally, it should be mentioned that there is a sense in which classroom language can never, by definition, be truly real. The very fact that it takes place inside the contrived setting of the classroom, it can be argued, makes genuine communication impossible. For this reason, it is perhaps necessary to set up a further category of language, which could be termed *quasi-real*—language that exhibits the linguistic and psychological criteria of real-life discourse while lacking the contextual criteria. Bearing this built-in restriction in mind, let us as teachers strive to get as close as possible to real-life communication. Real, or quasi-real, language use is both the means and the end. Our teaching should reflect this.

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Successful EFL Classes

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Whether or not this is so is the proper object of classroom-centered research. It should tell us not which method is best, but which activities and combinations of activities are more effective for different learning situations. Until research tells us otherwise, we should continue to follow our intuitions and develop our classes using a variety of techniques, both new and old, that meet the needs of our students.

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Aural Anticipation and Prediction Strategies

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8. As a "reverse prediction" exercise the students could hear an answer and have to work out the preceding question, or be given the conclusion of a talk or a story and have to outline what would lead up to it.

Conclusion

It is envisaged that these exercises will assist in the development of general strategies in prediction and anticipation that are transferable to the specific fields of study in which the students are engaged. To facilitate this transfer the teacher involved in providing English assistance for students who are nonnative speakers of the language could progressively incorporate into the program tape recordings of actual lectures and seminars and use these as the basis for the activities outlined above; e.g., an audio cassette recording or a videotape of a classroom lecture might be stopped at various points and the students asked to suggest what would come next. In this way the student could be trained to use prediction and anticipation strategies in real-life situations.

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FORUM NEWS & IDEAS

BANGLADESH

Conducting Communicative-Interaction Activities

MUHAMMAD SHAMSUL HOQUE
NCTB, Dhaka

Communicative-interaction activities are being successfully used in many EFL classes where favorable teaching situations exist. They can also be fruitfully used in classes unfavorably circumstanced for teaching/learning English as a foreign language, provided certain steps are taken in conducting the activities.

The main difficulty in such an unfavorable situation as I find in Bangladesh is that the people speak a good, rich common language—their mother tongue—and English is never used for ordinary day-to-day communication. As a result, the students are hardly ever exposed to the natural use of English in real-life situations. This poses an enormous problem for the teacher, who must try to involve his students in communicative language activities in the class. It is difficult to make the child feel the same instinctive urge for communicating in English that he has for communicating in his mother tongue.

In spite of these difficulties, the teacher may find his class well motivated to using communicative-interaction activities if he follows these steps:

Muhammad Shamsul Hoque is editor at the National Curriculum and Textbook Board, Dhaka.

He has taught English literature and EFL at several government colleges of Bangladesh. He has also taught language-teaching methodologies at the Dhaka Teachers' Training College. Mr. Hoque received an M.A. in English from the University of Dhaka and a diploma in education from the University of Exeter. He has coauthored the English textbooks that are centrally produced by the NCTB and used in all secondary schools of Bangladesh.

1. *Tell the students the plan and purpose.* The teacher should tell the students that though they do not normally use English for ordinary day-to-day communication, they are going to use English during the class or for a particular period of time. And he must make sure that this use becomes as natural as possible in the circumstances to express a particular situation or context either taken from the textbook or prepared by the teacher himself. He should also tell them that they are going to practice these pieces of language so that they will be able to use English in contexts even outside of the classroom, if need be. An understanding of the plan and purpose of the language work in the class will remove from their minds much of the shyness and embarrassment that hinder practice with English as a foreign language, and this will make the classroom atmosphere free, friendly, and hence favorable for communicative-interaction activities.

2. *Explain the context or situation.* Before beginning any language activity, the teacher should present a context or situation and explain it to the class. The context may be one, for example, in which a teacher greets his students or a man asks directions to a place. It may be taken from the textbook or prepared by the teacher. He should then tell the class that they are going to see how English is used in this context.

3. *Provide language items or structures.* After the context is clearly understood by the students, the teacher should give them the language model or structure for the context, first orally, then in writing. For the first context mentioned above, for example, the following model could be given:

T: Good morning, everybody/children.
SS: Good morning, sir/madam.
T: How are you today?
SS: We're fine, thank you. And how are you, sir?
T: Fine, thanks.

Or if the teacher uses a context from the book in which, for example, a student missed a grand opera show because he did not go to the fair last night and for which the *unreal condition* is to be used, the following model may be provided:

If he had gone to the fair last night, he would have enjoyed the grand opera show.

The language items here—*If* clause: past participle, and principal clause: *would have* + past participle—should be explained.

4. *Ignore mistakes in pronunciation.* While

the students are engaged in oral communicative language work, they should not be interrupted for correction of mistakes or pronunciation, as this will inhibit their fluency in speaking, thereby distracting them from communicative interactions. However, correction of pronunciation should be done in a general way in three or four minutes after the language activities.

3. *Use the mother tongue where necessary.* Using the students' mother tongue in explaining (1) the plan and purpose, (2) the context, (3) the structures, and some key words and expressions before the class starts communicative language exercises is very helpful, as it makes the language items and context familiar to the students. And familiarity with the structure and the context is an essential precondition for communicative language use. However, once things are clear to the students, the mother tongue should not be used.

The EFL teacher should not be given to believe that his students will spontaneously think in English, dream in English, eat in English, and live in English. But once they are motivated and prepared to learn English, the teacher can have the students successfully practice with communicative language exercises through roleplay, dialogue, conversation, description, etc., which are accepted by all language teachers as appropriate language forms for communicative-interaction activities in EFL classes. ■

EGYPT

Semantic Field Theory and Vocabulary Teaching

ALY ANWAR AMER
Tania University College of Education

The "semantic field" theory starts from the premise that the lexical content of a language is best treated not as a mere aggregation of independent words but as a collection of interrelating networks of relations between words. The meaning of most words is governed, in part, by the presence in the language of other words whose semantic functions are related in one or more ways to the same area of situational environment or culture (Robins 1980). A very simple example of a semantic field is the set of kinship terms *father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, uncle, aunt,* etc. Clearly, all these words share some aspect of meaning that is not present in the word *chair,* for instance.

It is noteworthy that words may be grouped together (related to each other) according to different criteria. Animals, for example, may be grouped in terms of physical or perceptual features; they may also be grouped in terms of

Aly Anwar Amer is an assistant professor of EFL at King Saud University, Abha. Just prior to this assignment he taught at Tanta University College of Education in Egypt. He has a B.A. in English and education and a special diploma in education from Ain Shams University, Cairo, as well as a Ph.D. in TEFL from London University Institute of Education.

Dr. Amer's interests include teacher training and curriculum and materials development.

nonphysical features, such as *pet, wild, food,* etc.

In a very practical situation, the grading of hotels, the word *good* has a very different meaning when used nontechnically (in the field of *good, bad, indifferent,* etc.) than when it is used "technically" by some travel agents, in a strictly limited system of comparative gradings as the lowest in the field of *first-class, luxurious, superior, good* (Robins 1980).

From a stylistic point of view, the verbs *steal, pilfer, lift, pinch, swipe,* and *snitch* may be subgrouped in terms of being formal (*steal, pilfer*), colloquial (*lift, pinch*), and slang (*swipe, snitch*).

Semantic fields and the psychological relatedness of the meaning of words:

To know the meanings of a set of words (like *chair, table, apple*) would seem to entail knowing that the first two are more closely related to each other than the third. That is, individual word meanings exist within systems of related meanings, and knowledge of the meaning relations among a set of words would seem to follow from knowledge of the constituent meanings. There is ample psychological evidence that supports this assumption.[1]

Semantic fields and foreign-language learning

Besides learning the basic sense of each new word, the learner of English as a foreign language should recognize its relation to other words with similar meaning.

It has been shown above that the human mind takes account of such similarity of meaning in organizing words. Hence, it is plausible to assume that a method of teaching that takes account of the psychological processes underlying semantic relatedness must be more effective pedagogically than one that does not. It is therefore logical to teach foreign-language vocabulary in semantic sets.

From the pedagogic point of view, "componential analysis" (CA) offers a systematic and easy way of describing similarity and difference in meaning. It consists of breaking down the meaning of a word into what are known as semantic components or features (Lyons 1978).

Using CA to teach semantic sets enables the learner to recognize: first, the semantic relatedness between words (words belong to the same semantic set when they share some semantic features); second, the fact that words hardly ever share all features. In practice, very few words in any language are interchangeable in all contexts (Channell 1980). Thus the term "synonym" used in foreign-language teaching is often confusing and inaccurate. CA shows the learner that words similar in meaning are not synonymous. Therefore, it is pedagogically desirable to provide the learner with exercises that incorporate various semantic sets. The following exercises are examples:

EXERCISE 1

Using the information in the following table fill in the blanks in the sentences below

WORD	Affect with wonder	because unexpected	because difficult to believe	so as to cause confusion	because shocking so as to leave speechless
surprise	+	+			
astonish	+				
amaze	+		+		
astound	+			+	
					+

(Adapted from Channell 1980)

1. They were clearly _____ at our sudden arrival.
2. I was _____ at the three-year-old boy's ability to swim.
3. The tropical islanders were _____ to see snow for the first time in Europe.
4. His parents were _____ to learn that their young son had robbed a bank.
5. I was _____ to receive so many presents on my birthday.

1. Adults are better at remembering words from lists that contain semantically related subsets than words from lists of unrelated words (Cofer 1966; Cofer, Bruce, and Reicher 1966). In addition, if the semantically related words are separated in the list, adults tend to cluster them by meaning in output (Bousfield 1953; Jenkins and Russell 1952). The degree of clustering has been found to increase with age (Neimark, Slotnick, and Ulrich 1971). Moreover, it has been noticed that children initially organize words not by meaning but thematically (Inhelder and Piaget 1964; Nelson 1977). On the other hand, speech errors made by native speakers (slips of the tongue) show that most wrong words used come from the same semantic field as the intended word (Brown and McNeill 1966; Fromkin 1973).

EXERCISE 2

Look at the following set of words: *palace, villa, mansion, lodge, hut, bungalow.* Which word means:

1. a house, small, of one story?
2. a house or cabin of the plainest or crudest kind?
3. a house in the country, for the hunting or shooting season?
4. a house, large and stately?
5. a house on its own grounds or garden, on the outskirts of a town?
6. a house, the official residence of a sovereign or an important figure?

EXERCISE 3

Insert the following words in the sentences below: *murdered, executed, assassinated, killed.*

1. The disease _____ the children.
2. He was _____ by a falling stone.
3. President Kennedy was _____ in 1963.
4. He was _____ for murder.
5. Five people were _____ in the car accident.
6. The man who _____ his wife was sentenced to death.
7. The man who _____ the president was _____ after a fair trial.

EXERCISE 4

Insert the following words in the sentences below: *accused, impeached, indicted, blamed, criticized.*

1. The minister was _____ for taking bribes.
2. She _____ her servant of stealing her diamond ring.
3. The arrested people were _____ for the riot.
4. They _____ the falling stone for killing the boy.
5. The committee _____ the factory.
6. Factories were _____ for polluting the river.

EXERCISE 5

Use the following information to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

crumb: a small piece of dry food.
rag: a small piece of cloth.
drop: a small amount of liquid.
dab: a small amount of something soft.
chip: a small piece broken off something hard.
splash: a small amount of liquid added to something.
dash: a small amount of something added, liquid or solid.

1. The mouse ran off with a _____ of cheese.
2. Stick it down with a _____ of glue.
3. Milk in your coffee? Yes, please. Just a _____.
4. I'd like a _____ of pepper in my food.
5. I need a _____ to polish my shoes with.
6. There is a _____ of lipstick on your jacket.
7. A _____ of glass fell on the floor.

Learners should be encouraged to consult dictionaries to arrive at the correct answers. Group discussion is a fruitful technique through which the teacher can help the learners arrive at the correct answers. In exercises 1, 2, and 5 the semantic features are given. In exercise 3, the verbs are to be explained from a sociolinguistic point of view; i.e., we must understand the differences between the intentions underlying the actions in question and the social settings and roles of the persons involved. A person may be killed in an accident or by a falling stone or by a disease, but he can be murdered, executed, or assassinated only by another human being. Moreover, the difference between them lies in the character of the intention: *murder*, on purpose, and having the goal of revenge or personal gain; *assassinate*, having a political aim; and *execute*, being killed as a legal punishment for some criminal act.

As for the verbs in exercise 4, learners should realize that *indict* applies to the "formal" accusation of a person based on positive legal evidence; *impeach* is limited to the "formal" accusation of a high political figure; *accuse* would have no effect at all if the judge were unable to prove the accused to be guilty; it also applies to the "informal" accusation of a person. Moreover, those three verbs involve "social morality," and we attribute morality only to people, not to inanimate objects. Therefore, they are used only with human beings. On the other hand, we *blame* inanimate objects as well as people, but we usually *criticize* only those objects that are somehow connected with man's actions. We blame a factory and criticize a factory, but only blame and not criticize a stone. While the accused, if he proves to be guilty, deserves punishment, the one who is criticized does not necessarily deserve punishment, and criticism is often understood as a sort of help (Markova 1978).

It should be noted that such exercises are not vocabulary-development exercises. Their purpose is not to broaden the learner's vocabulary per se, but rather to develop his awareness of the semantic relatedness among words of similar meaning.

Learners should be encouraged to form semantic sets through their reading. They should recognize how the use of one word instead of another within the same semantic set may lead to misunderstanding. Therefore, it is important that they explicitly recognize the objectives and rationale behind these exercises. An explicit understanding of the reason for an activity often improves motivation and facilitates learning.

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FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

A Doth-Yourself Crossword

ALLAN RYDING

CLUES DOWN

1. The computer has _____ a mistake again. (4 letters)
2. I _____ this coat a few days ago. It cost very little. (6)
3. Who _____ the football match last Saturday? (3)
4. At the moment I'm _____ to do a crossword. (6)
5. You shouldn't ____ across the road until the lights are green. (2)
6. When I was at school we _____ Latin and Greek instead of English. (6)
7. I usually _____ up when the alarm clock rings, but this morning I didn't. (4)
8. I have _____ two letters to England this week. (7)
9. He _____ me his old camera for 20 pounds. (4)
10. Where ____ you live? (2)
11. The airplane _____ traveling at 250 mph when a bird suddenly flew into one of the jets. (3)
12. Have you _____ the new ABBA record? It's really great! (5)
13. Roger can't walk because he has _____ his leg. (6)
14. I _____ a note for the milkman this morning because we needed two more pints. (5)
15. I've only _____ fifty cents on me. (3)
16. _____ he go swimming yesterday? (3)
17. He can't _____ the blackboard without his glasses. (3)
18. I _____ the house at 7:30 this morning. (4)
19. She _____ English very well. (6)
20. He _____ as fast as he could to catch the bus. (3)
21. Fred isn't at home; he's _____ for a short walk. (4)
22. _____ Ronald smoke? (4)
23. I've _____ you a thousand times not to smoke in class. (4)
24. He ____ sleeping at the moment. Perhaps you'd like to talk to the vice chairman instead. (2)
25. I _____ him a razor blade for his birthday. (4)
26. I've been _____ watches for years. It's the best job I've ever had. (6)
27. Ouch! That knife is really sharp! Look, I've _____ my finger. (3)
28. Yesterday I _____ 40 minutes for my friend to come and we both _____ (32 DOWN) the train. (6) (6)
29. How long have you been _____ English? (8)
30. Have you _____ the latest 007 film? (4)
31. I haven't _____ in a hotel bed before. (5)
32. See 28 DOWN.
33. The cat was _____ on the mat, but now it has gone somewhere else. (7)
34. I was _____ on January 2, 1958, in Hertfordshire. (4)
35. I think; therefore I ____ (2)
36. He was _____ on his coat to leave when I arrived. (7)
37. What did you _____? I didn't hear you. (3)

CLUES ACROSS

1. Last night the phone _____ at 2 o'clock. (4 letters)
2. The strong wind _____ his hat away. (4)
3. It's late. ____ you think Godot will come? (2)
4. I've _____ a cold, so I can't talk clearly. (6)
5. I _____ up in a small town near London. (4)
6. If you don't _____ your job, _____ (8 ACROSS) to find another. (4) (3)
7. I _____ it would rain, so I brought an umbrella. (4)
8. See 6 ACROSS.
9. My name is Joc-elyn but my friends _____ me Joc. (4)
10. Have you ever _____ about leaving your country? (7)
11. I _____ my pen this morning, but I've _____ (13 ACROSS) it again. (4) (5)
12. I've been _____ English for years and still enjoy the job. (8)
13. See 11 ACROSS.
14. _____ you telling me you've spent all your money already? (3)
15. Did you _____ my last letter? I sent it on the first of February. (3)
16. Haven't you _____ your homework yet? You are lazy! (4)
17. He _____ me again. Look at my arm, it's all red. (3)
18. My uncle often _____ books by Agatha Christie. (5)
19. Mr. Carpenter has a very good voice. He _____ very well. (5)
20. Do you like _____ English? (8)
21. I've _____ his name. I think it begins with a Z. (9)
22. Something has been _____ at the table leg. Do you think there could be mice in the house? (8)
23. What I don't like about our teacher is that he _____ everything we say. (7)
24. George _____ too much chocolate; it's bad for his teeth. (4)
25. He never tells the truth; he always _____ (4)
26. We _____ like doing homework. (4)
27. I always _____ to school on foot. (4)
28. Mr. Johnson is busy at the moment; he's _____ an urgent report. (7)
29. The dog is _____ on the grass in the sun. (5)
30. I _____ cornflakes for breakfast. (3)
31. I never _____ coffee before going to bed because it keeps me awake. (5)
32. They first _____ in 1958 and got married 9 months later. (3)
33. We are late. The film has already _____ (7)
34. Have you ever _____ to Scotland? (4)
35. I feel sick. I must have _____ too many chips. (5)
36. Can you _____ the guitar? (4)
37. The cat _____ on the mat. (3)
38. When he was a child, Picasso only _____ simple houses with little animals. (4)

SOLUTIONS DOWN

1. MADE
2. BOUGHT
3. BORN
4. TRYING
5. GO
6. LEARNT
7. MAKE
8. WRITTEN
9. SOLD
10. DO
11. WAS
12. HEARD
13. BROKEN
14. WROTE
15. GOT
16. DID
17. SEE
18. LEFT
19. SPEAKS
20. RAN
21. GONE
22. DOES
23. TOLD
24. IS
25. GAVE
26. MAKING
27. CUT
28. WAITED
29. LEARNING
30. SEEN
31. SLEPT
32. MISSED
33. SITTING
34. BORN
35. AM
36. PUTTING
37. SAY

SOLUTIONS ACROSS

1. RANG
2. BLEW
3. DO
4. CAUGHT
5. GREW
6. LIKE
7. KNEW
8. TRY
9. CALL
10. THOUGHT
11. LOST
12. TEACHING
13. FOUND
14. ARE
15. GET
16. DONE
17. HIT
18. READS
19. SINGS
20. SPEAKING
21. FORGOTTEN
22. NIBBLING
23. REPEATS
24. EATS
25. LIES
26. DON'T
27. COME
28. WRITING
29. LYING
30. ATE
31. DRINK
32. MET
33. STARTED
34. BEEN
35. EATEN
36. PLAY
37. SAT
38. DREW

From the solutions above it is clear that the crossword overleaf is no ordinary crossword, but really more of a "cross-verb," as all the words in the crosswords are verbs. This has several advantages for the purposes of language teaching. The student doing the puzzle can review irregular verb forms and, depending on how the clues are formulated, can review the structure and usage of a number of tenses. This type of crossword is the only teaching aid I know of that really makes students want to work on tenses. What is more important, though, is that they don't need the teacher to be successful, and the feeling that they have done the crossword on their own gives the students confidence in themselves. The crossword gives them all the help they need. Just think of how much guidance the crossword gave you when you were trying to solve it. The context of the clues suggested which verbs and tenses might be possible in the solution. Then the number of letters the solution had was specified, which meant that the possibilities were narrowed down. Then, finally, where words crossed each other in the crossword, you were told whether you had made a mistake. These three aids helped you to find the correct solutions.

Allan Ryding has taught at a variety of private and state schools both at the university and secondary level. He is now a free-lance teacher in Marburg, Hessen, Germany. Mr. Ryding has published articles in *Modern English Teacher*, *Practical English Teaching*, and *Fremdsprache Englisch*.

Having done the crossword, you now know what a "crossverb" is, and you can probably imagine how your students could benefit from doing one. The crossword may not be suitable for some or even most of your classes, but you don't have to make a new one: all you have to do is to rewrite the clues. You can easily rewrite them to suit the level and needs of your classes. For example, just look at the verbs in the solutions above and think about what kind of sentences you could make to include the verb. Think about how many progressive tenses could be made with *speaking, putting, learning,* etc. And what about words like *bought*? This could be a perfect or a past participle; it could be used in a passive structure, in a conditional sentence, or in reported speech. There are also possibilities for making questions and negatives. You can vary the vocabulary and thematic content to suit children or adults.* In other words, you can use the crossword in any class more advanced than first-year beginners. That's why it's a Do-It-Yourself Crossverb! ■

*In such cases as nonsense, which may not be known, you can either suggest to the class that they guess the word in their own language and then try to look for a possible English equivalent in their dictionaries, or you can simply fill the word in for them before handing out the crossword.

KOREA

This Is Not Art: It's Communication

DEBORAH ANN MASTERSON
Gyeongsang National University
Chinju City

A picture is worth a thousand words. This is especially true in the EFL classroom. Suppose an EFL student asks you, "What is 'to turn a cartwheel'?" What do you do? Do you demonstrate? Good for you. If cartwheels are not in your repertoire, do you look in your bilingual dictionary under "cartwheel"? I didn't find it in mine. Do you pore over your picture file looking for a picture of someone turning a cartwheel? Good luck. The easy solution is to draw a simple stick figure:

"To Turn a Cartwheel"

Or how about this typical EFL dilemma? One teacher is called upon to present a dialogue among two or more characters. Do you change your voice for each character? Do you stand in a different spot in the room for each one? Again, the easy solution is to draw the characters on the board and point to the one who is speaking the line of dialogue:

"Easy for you," you say. People have often told me that they envy my "talent" to represent vocabulary or concepts quickly and clearly in a classroom with simple drawings. I don't consider this a talent but a skill that I developed, the same way I learned to diagram sentences. It is merely a matter of internalizing a few simple rules of balance and proportion, being willing to take a few risks, and practicing. Any EFL teacher should be able to expand his or her repertoire of language-teaching routines with the addition of simple drawings. How, though, is one to discover these mysterious rules of drawing?

In the first part of this article, I will try to explain these rules in a clear and concise fashion, beginning with the drawing of stick figures from head to foot. In the second part, I'll move on to ways of representing characters and emotions via simple drawings of faces. And in the third part, I'll take a quick look at some cartooning conventions that can be useful. The last part will be an exploration of a few of the many ways to apply your newfound skill to the presentation of EFL materials, using as an example an unillustrated dialogue from the text *Milk and Honey*. I will illustrate it for contextualized, closed-book presentation, using faces to represent the characters and stick figures to represent their actions.

Stick figures

The most important thing to realize at the outset is this: Your drawings are meant to make the material clear and memorable. They are *not art* and needn't be judged by artistic standards. Even a bad drawing makes a more lasting impression than none at all.

A special thanks to James Wm. Woodring, cartoonist and animator, for invaluable advice.

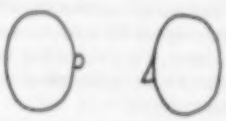
Deborah Masterson graduated from California State College in 1975 with a B.A. in fine arts.

After studying Spanish for a year at the University of Utah, she moved to Mexico City, where she became interested in teaching English. In 1982 she returned to the University of Utah to earn a master's degree in linguistics/TESOL. Ms. Masterson is now an English instructor at Gyeongsang National University, located in the city of Chinju, Korea.

Let's begin with a standing figure. I suggest that you practice on a blackboard with chalk, remembering to press firmly. Find some nice, soft, chalky chalk, not the hard squeaky kind—it really does make a difference. Draw big, and start high on the board—think about the students at the back of the room.

The *head* is an oval:

Practice several ovals side by side. Do these quickly and confidently. Let the movement be in your elbow and shoulder, not in your wrist. Now step back. Are your ovals consistently flat on one side or pointed at one end? Try again, and when you come to the part that is disproportionate, swing wide, overcorrect if necessary. With a bit of conscious practice, these ovals will become automatic. To show a head in profile, a nose like a C or an L can be added:



The *neck and trunk* begin at the bottom of the oval. Let your arm and gravity pull the chalk down the board toward the floor. When you reach the tailbone—about twice the height of the head—you should be directly below where you started. There may be a slight curve in the spine. The outside of the curve is the belly; the inside, the back:

The *legs* are as long as the trunk and the head together (or three heads). Don't make them perfectly straight: keep them flexible. The knees are located halfway between the hips and the feet. The feet are wedge-shaped and flat where they touch the ground:

The *shoulders* are approximately one head wide and the *arms* come down to just below the hips. The elbow is located halfway between the shoulders and the hand. The hand is simply a small oval. Thumbs and fingers appear if and when needed:

That's basically all there is to it. This figure, let's call him/her "Chris," is sufficiently detailed to cover most situations. But what if you need to clearly distinguish between male and female? We'll give Chris a loose-fitting dress that is cinched at the waist, about halfway down her trunk. By raising the soles of her shoes you can indicate high heels:

Now let's try some more active poses. It helps, when portraying actions, to do them yourself. Ask yourself: Are my knees or elbows bent? What part of my body are my hands level with? Is my spine straight or curved? Is my head inclined? Are my hips directly below my shoulders? In a body at rest, the hips are usually below the shoulders unless some of the body's weight is supported by something else:

Now, look at the difference between walking and running:

In running, the body inclines forward and the feet are off the ground. In walking, remember, the foot is flat where it touches the ground.

In drawing Chris sitting down, position him sideways to show off the angles of the hips and knees. Take a tip from the ancient Egyptians and show body parts at the angle from which they are most recognizable. (See Illustration 1.) Notice that the legs, feet, and head

Illustration 1

are shown in profile, while the upper body (and the eye!) are shown frontally:

Did that cartwheel at the beginning seem impossibly difficult? Just take it step by step. Think how it feels to turn a cartwheel. You start with the weight on one foot, the other foot is held off the ground:

The head is low, near the knees. The back is bent, and the weight is borne by one arm:

Then the weight shifts to both hands, legs are over the head, and the back is straight:

In completing the cartwheel the back arches, one foot touches down, and the other hand comes off the ground:

The analysis of the action may be tricky, but as you can see, the drawing is not.

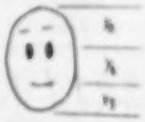
To condense the preceding into five main points:

1. Head and hands are ovals; feet are wedges.
2. Trunk = two heads.
3. Legs = three heads (trunk + head).
4. Knees and elbows are midpoints.
5. Keep it flexible!

Faces

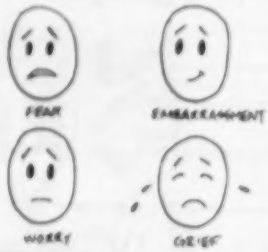
Sometimes you need to portray facial features or expressions either to distinguish among characters or to indicate emotions. Again, as with the stick figures, you are your own best source of information. Look in a mirror and make an exaggerated expression. Check your eyebrows: Are they high or low? Together do they form a V, a A, or a —? How about your mouth: Does it turn up or down? Is it open or closed?

Begin with the oval head. The eyes are located a third of the way down, the mouth is located a third of the way up. Eyebrows are for expressing emotion. The nose is not, so you may leave it out. (The nose is useful, however, for distinguishing between characters. We will discuss this later.)



Intense emotions, such as happy surprise or horrified shock, are characterized by eyebrows high on the face. Also, high eyebrows characterize a snob:

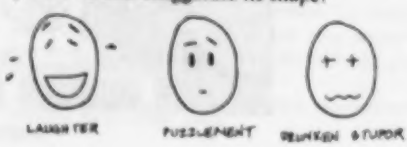
Uncertain and sorrowful emotions are shown by a A configuration of the eyebrows:



In *negative emotions* the eyebrows form a low V:

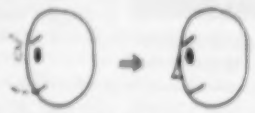
The importance of eyebrows is demonstrated above by the fact that "fear" and "anger" are otherwise identical.

Mouths can take many shapes. Look at your own and exaggerate its shape:



These characters can appear to be looking up, down, or to one side simply by shifting the placement of the features:

To show the head in profile, draw half the expression. Remember: a C or an L can be used for a nose:



Simple details like hairstyles, mustaches, freckles, noses, and ears (Cs) can help distinguish among multiple characters:

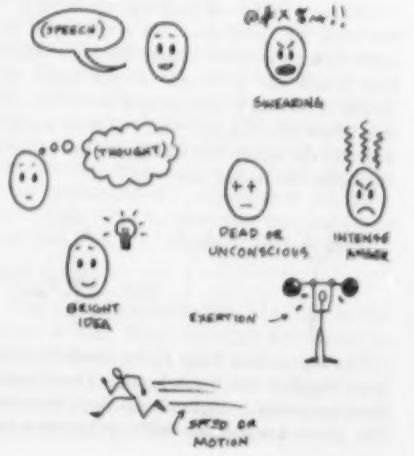
The importance of observing yourself and those around you can't be overemphasized. Study faces, and pay special attention to eyebrows and mouths.

Now to summarize five points to keep in mind:

1. The oval head is divided into thirds.
2. The eyebrows and mouth carry the expression.
3. Optional ears and nose are Cs and Ls.
4. Observe yourself and others.
5. Keep it simple!

Cartooning conventions

There are many cartooning conventions that you can use. If the students don't already recognize these, they'll quickly catch on. A few are shown here; many more can be found in the funny papers:



Using stick figures and faces in adapting lessons

Let's consider some of the possible applications of stick figures and faces to EFL classroom presentations. Of course, it's great to be able to quickly and clearly illustrate vocabulary without resorting to translation. For example, look at the differences in these two presentations:

A

B TO ENTER = 入り口

TO LEAVE = 出口

Presentation A is applicable to any language group or any mix of groups. It attracts attention and doesn't require translation. Presentation B requires not only that all the students speak the same first language, but that the teacher does, too. Also, B assigns a translation to the vocabulary item rather than a concept.

These simple types of drawings should not be confined solely to the blackboard. In testing, for example, they can be very useful. Compare these two test questions:

A. I was late, so I _____ to work.

B. (run) I was late, so I _____ to work.

Both A and B elicit the answer *ran*. However, A requires the student to supply the missing verb without an infinitive-form clue. This is more realistic in terms of a student's experience when he is actually using a second language. If he can't think of a word, no one is going to supply the infinitive. Question A also allows the student to fall back on his lexical resources and reply: *I was late, so I dashed/hurried/sped/jogged/raced to work*—all perfectly good answers.

As an example of a more complex use of simple drawings, I will adapt an unillustrated dialogue that appears on page 150 of the text *Milk and Honey*. (See Illustration 2.) It's a good, natural-sounding language sample that includes examples of reduced forms and deals with a subject that will be of interest to the students. The instructions state: "Read this dialogue with your teacher." Reading the dialogue with the teacher is probably the least effective way of presenting it. I can adapt the dialogue through the use of simple drawings to make it much more memorable and meaningful.

First, two distinct characters are created to represent the two speakers, Carmen and María. The difference between them can be as subtle as different hairstyles and noses:

Then, by changing their expressions and adding a few explanatory figures, we can represent the flow and direction of the conversation. (For the completed illustration of the dialogue, see Illustration 3.) Notice that it is not necessary to depict each line of dialogue—only to indicate the topic of discussion and the speaker's feelings about it.

Now the dialogue may be presented with books closed. This requires less translation and encourages listening comprehension and creative understanding (Krashen's "i + 1"). It focuses the students' attention on one point—the illustration—and not on their individual texts. It gives the teacher the opportunity to expand the discussion of the dialogue, yet it allows the students the security—by watching the teacher point to the various elements of the drawing—of knowing exactly what is under discussion. To illustrate: while pointing to the bill that María is holding, the teacher might ask: *How much is the bill? Is that a lot? Did María call Pittsburgh? Does she know anyone there? Do you? How much does it cost you to call home?* etc.

When they thoroughly understand the dialogue, the students may read it. After practicing reading, again with the books closed, the

Read this dialogue with your teacher.

Carmen: Hello?
María: Hello, Carmen?
Carmen: María?
María: Yes. Oh, Carmen, what am I going to do?
Carmen: What's the matter?
María: I just got my telephone bill.
Carmen: Yes.
María: It's $120.
Carmen: What?
María: I didn't make all these calls. Here's one to Pittsburgh. I don't even know anyone in Pittsburgh.
Carmen: Don't worry about it.
María: What can I do? I can't pay $120. I don't have $120.
Carmen: Go down to the phone company on Monday.
María: I work.
Carmen: You can call them.
María: You know I hate to speak English over the phone.
Carmen: Write them a letter.
María: I hate writing English even more.
Carmen: Well, María, I don't know what to suggest.
María: Do you think there is someone who speaks Spanish at the phone company?
Carmen: Probably. Call and ask.
María: Good idea. Thanks.
Carmen: Tell me what happens.
María: Okay. Thanks, Carmen. Bye.
Carmen: Yeah, bye.

Illustration 2

Illustration 3

students may try to reconstruct the conversation individually, in pairs, or in groups, either orally or in writing, using the drawings to guide them.

The drawings should be prepared in advance to be copied onto the blackboard before class begins. As an alternative, you can draw on a large poster board. This is especially useful because this "storyboard" can be used again and again. Also, the drawings can be distributed on photocopied sheets. This has the disadvantage of dispersing the students' attention, but these sheets can be kept by the students and used at home. In addition, preparing in advance gives you the opportunity to analyze the dialogue and discover the speakers' motivations. A careful analysis also helps you to anticipate cultural, grammatical, and pronunciation problems and to make necessary adjustments in the dialogue before class. Remember: EFL texts are not carved in stone!

As you see, a picture truly is worth at least a thousand words. The time you put into developing your drawing skills is well worth it. And above all, do not forget: This is NOT ART; it's COMMUNICATION.

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NIGERIA

Integrating Reading and Writing

YEMI ABODERIN

Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo

Many scholars have commented on the positive relationship between reading and writing, and some have reported research findings that confirm such a relationship. Paul O'Dea (1965) reports that those who read widely are rewarded in several ways, one of which is increased proficiency in writing, "most clearly seen . . . in the areas of diction and sentence structure." Nathan Blount (1973) summarizes several studies that indicate a positive relationship between good writers and good readers. Ingrid Strom (1960) also summarizes research findings that tend to confirm the positive relationship between reading and writing. These include (1) an investigation by Clark that shows that students who had additional reading made more improvement in grammar and usage than students who studied only formal grammar, and (2) Bagley's findings that students who studied only literature wrote better compositions than did students who studied formal (traditional) grammar.

Adewuyi Oyesomi Aboderin is head of the Department of Curriculum Studies and Audio-visual Instruction at Adeyemi College of Education, University of Ife, Ondo, where he is also director of the Use of English unit. He is involved in teacher training at the college and has also taught at secondary schools in Nigeria. He received a master's degree in Nigeria and a Ph.D. in English education from Florida State University in the United States.

A few of the experiments concerned with frequency of writing also seem to indicate that students with increased reading assignments write as well as or better than students who write more frequently. In Frank Heys' experiment (1962) to determine whether frequent writing teaches writing, the group who had additional reading and less writing made greater gains on one of the measures of writing improvement than did the group that wrote frequently. Heys concluded that for many students reading is a positive influence on writing ability.

From a review of the above and other studies, it seems clear that a curriculum that seeks to integrate reading and writing is likely to succeed in improving the competence of learners in two important language skills commonly categorized as literacy. And from a practical and observable standpoint, it would seem that all students, regardless of ability, would benefit from greater success in reading.

Since reading and writing skills have been shown to be positively related, I will devote the rest of this article to showing how writing skills can be developed through reading—through a careful study of specific techniques in reading passages, through an imitation of such techniques, and "through retelling a personal experience parallel in tone or mood to that of the original work" (Burton et al. 1975). This is in accord with Murray's (1968) suggestion that "each writing teacher should have a file of articles or textbooks or collections of essays, a library resource which can be shown to the student at the time he is able to appreciate what the writer has done." After examining the materials, the student should, with the help of the teacher, be able to answer a number of questions about the author's style: how he is able to achieve the effect he achieves, why he organizes his materials the way he does, how he makes his writing show what he intends instead of telling his intention directly. Such considerations, says Murray, will lead the writer to master the three important skills in composition: how to organize thoughts, how to test those thoughts for logic, and how to express them in clear and concise language (Murray 1968).

Elementary level

At the elementary level of integration, reading passages should be used as a guide to help pupils understand and master the basics of composition: sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and other mechanics of writing. In addition, pupils should be exposed to various structures, formats, and patterns of organization of ideas. The types of guided writing that should result from reading assignments at this level are copying, gap filling, and dictation or "dicto-comp" (Aboderin 1984). This practice puts on the teacher the burden of careful selection of suitable passages for copying, gap filling, and dictation.

Following the reading of a passage, a portion that could be related to the pupils' experience might be selected for guided writing. One way of encouraging careful attention to patterns and usage is to provide alternative forms of verbs, pronouns, or any other grammatical item and ask pupils to make the appropriate selection while copying the passage. Here is an example (taken from Grieve's *Effective English, Student's Book I*, 1978, p. 7).

Instruction: Here is a short story about someone's father. You will notice that when the present simple is used, two forms are given here. Only one of these is right. It is your task to write this story, using only the correct forms of the present simple.

My father's name is Mr. Anyumba. He *live/lives* with my mother in the flats opposite the Post Office. He *work/works* in the textile mill as a machine operator.

While he is at work, he *look/looks* after several looms. These are machines that *weave/weaves* cloth. He *make/makes* sure that the machines *run/runs* properly, *check/checks* that there is enough thread for each machine, and *mend/mends* any threads that *get/gets* broken. On some days threads *break/breaks* very often.

He *has/have* two days off each week. He *like/likes* to relax at home on his first day off because he *feel/feels* tired after the week's work. While he is at home, he *read/reads* the newspaper and *listen/listens* to the radio. In the evening he *visit/visits* some of his friends.

On his other day off he take/takes my mother and my brother, and we go out in the car. Sometimes we visit/visits friends in the next town, and sometimes we take/takes some food with us and has/have a picnic in some beautiful place in the countryside. We enjoy/enjoys these outings very much.

Pupils should be told to correct their mistakes when the original passage is put up for them to see. By insisting that pupils correct their own work in copying, gap filling, and dictation, we are training them to be good observers when they read and good proofreaders when they write.

Intermediate level

At this level, extracts can be taken from longer passages, or a whole story can be used. Questions should then be asked to bring out the salient points in the passage and emphasize useful language points. The questions asked serve as a test of comprehension. After comprehension comes application, when pupils are called upon to use the story as a means of recollecting real or imaginary personal experience. They are then asked to encapsulate such experience within the framework of the reading passage. An illustration of the method is provided below. (The passage is taken from Roland Hindmarsh's *Understand and Write*, 1965.)

The Geography Test

From his seat, Oyoo could see that Ondieki had opened his geography book inside his desk and was trying to read all the chapter again as quickly as possible. Mutyaba was taking out his atlas and putting it on his desk.

"No geography books on the desks," called out the teacher, standing at the front. He took Mutyaba's atlas and put it on the teacher's table. "Are you all ready?"

The boys held their pens ready and looked up at Mr. Angwenyi.

"Question One. Write down the name of the longest river in Africa which flows towards the north."

Oyoo saw all the boys' heads bend down over their desks. He looked at the narrow piece of paper in front of him. Nothing was written on it except "Frederick Oyoo, 7B, 4/11/64." He had read about a big river called the Congo, in a country far away to the west. He wrote on his paper: "1. River Congo."

"Question Two. Write down the names of two African countries which grow a lot of cotton."

This time Oyoo saw that many boys were unable to answer. Ondieki was trying to lift the lid of his desk, but Mr. Angwenyi looked at him and he took his hands away. Mutyaba turned his head towards the window and seemed unhappy. Oyoo wrote "2. Uganda" on his paper. In his own country not much cotton was grown. Mr. Angwenyi was going to read the next question. When he began speaking, Oyoo wrote "Russia" quickly on his paper beside "Uganda."

"Question Three. In the north of Africa there is a large desert. Name it."

Oyoo thought for a few seconds and put "3. Sahara" on his piece of paper. There were two more questions. Then the boys in the front desks walked to the back of the class, collecting the test papers. When Mutyaba reached the back of the class, Oyoo whispered to him: "Easy questions today."

When the papers were marked, Ondieki had four answers correct and had scored eight marks. Oyoo had three marks and Mutyaba had four. Three boys had full marks and seven had scored nine. Nobody had less than three.

At the end of the reading passage, Hindmarsh gave ten multiple-choice questions which he entitled "Test your understanding" and five free-response questions entitled "Answer questions in writing." After these comprehension questions Hindmarsh introduced the kind of integration advocated here. His application stage is entitled "Imagine and write." The four essay questions asked are the following:

1. Think of a subject in which you sometimes have tests at school. What do you have to do at the beginning of the lesson before you begin answering the first question of the test?

2. Write three sentences about things you can see and three sentences about things you can hear from your desk in your class when you are having a test.

3. Imagine you are Ondieki. You are in the playground after the test. Oyoo has forgotten questions four and five in the test, and also the answers to these questions. You tell him the questions and answers again. Write what you told Oyoo.

4. Imagine you are Mr. Angwenyi. Say what you noticed about Mutyaba, Ondieki, and Oyoo during the test, and say what you think about their results.

This exercise could be extended to cover longer stories at this level. Simple storybooks come in handy for this purpose. I have stated elsewhere (Aboderin 1980:109) that after reading children's adventure stories, such as "Moonlight Adventures" in *Adventures of Souza* by Kola Onadipe, a number of questions could be asked to launch pupils into meaningful writing. Such questions could be about the hero, his friends, the stern manner of his father, why he did not leave his cousins and come back home, how a cousin was arrested by the Pastor. The discussion arising from such questions will impress on the pupils the structure of the story as well as effective use of language. After the class discussion, pupils could be asked to write on one of the following topics:

1. A moonlight play in which I took part.
2. The time I disobeyed my father and the consequence(s).

Pupils will undoubtedly recollect similar personal experiences which they can express within the framework of what they read in the storybook.

Advanced level

This should be a further extension of the intermediate level. At this level, a suitable full-length novel can be assigned for reading, so different episodes may be used as frameworks for essay writing. For instance, after reading Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, pupils' attention could be drawn to the description of the wrestling match. Then pupils can be asked to describe a sporting event they have seen recently. Camara Laye's *The African Child* contains a number of interesting episodes. The punishment meted out to a bully, the account of the circumcision, and Camara's holiday in his mother's village are some of the episodes that can stimulate topics such as:

1. A memorable event that happened recently.
2. A traditional ceremony in my town.
3. How I spent my last vacation.

Moreover, relevant feature articles in newspapers and magazines within the linguistic levels of the pupils can be brought to class for discussion before similar essay topics are assigned. This is in keeping with Murray's suggestion that each writing teacher should keep a file of articles or collections of essays that can be discussed with students when they are able to appreciate what the writer has done.

Conclusion

Several studies have revealed that increased reading results in improved writing. It therefore seems advisable for teachers to integrate the two skills more fully. They should incorporate more reading experiences into their pupils' writing programs or design a program that makes the writing assignment a consequence of the reading experience. It is obvious that in order to write successfully pupils need to have a subject over which they can exercise sufficient control. It therefore seems logical that increased reading experiences will enhance students' control over composition topics integrated into the reading programs. This practice will provide training that will ensure proficiency and confidence in later independent writing tasks.

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UNITED KINGDOM

Putting Newspapers in Their Rightful Place

JUDE HOWELL

The Guardian, The Daily Mirror, The Washington Post, The New York Times . . . an endless source of material for the innovative teacher. Newspapers can put the sparkle back into the dull, tedious, treadmill lesson. There are several reasons why they make for lively, entertaining, and memorable learning. First, the authenticity of the texts provides for motivated reading, leaving the foreign student with a sense of pride at having accomplished a recognizable feat in the challenging arena of English-language learning. Second, a newspaper boasts an abundance of texts embracing the commentary, the review, the feature story, the straight report, recipes, horoscopes, and ads, all of which await dissection by the discourse-sensitive teacher. Third, a newspaper contains a wealth of topics ranging from sports to the prices of stocks and bonds, exposing the lexically starved student to an assortment of registers. Fourth, newspapers lend themselves not only to eye-swiveling reading but also to the equally reverent skills of speaking, writing, and even listening. Newspapers are a godsend for the student and also gentle on the impoverished teacher's purse. Cheap, easily exploitable, guaranteed as an effective panacea for the ailing EFL lesson, newspapers are a must for the avant-garde teacher.

Jude Howell is studying for a postgraduate degree at the University of Sussex, after having taught in an advanced teachers' training program for The British Council at Jiao Tong University, Shanghai. She graduated from the University of York in 1978 with a B.A. in linguistics and then received a scholarship to study Hindi in Delhi. While in Delhi she taught part time to supplement her grant and in 1981 returned to England to do a PGCE in EFL/ESL at Leicester University. Immediately afterwards Ms. Howell started teaching English in a middle school in Chongqing, China.

Yet newspapers often present enormous problems for the foreign reader who may be unfamiliar with the culture and politics of the target country. Not only does a lack of awareness of the social context cause difficulties, but the language itself may prove such an insurmountable obstacle that the student becomes dispirited and eventually abandons all hope. One way of tackling these problems is to take a global approach to newspaper reading, which means placing newspapers in their sociocultural context. Newspaper articles are often used sporadically as isolated text for variety in reading comprehension. They are generally treated as single textual elements rather than as parts of textual wholes. But the newspaper itself, apart from its primary goal of informing its readers of the news, also has the sociopolitical function of selecting and presenting information in such a way as to lead the reader to certain "fast food" conclusions. Thus, the teacher should aim to put the orphaned newspaper text back into its familial environment of the "particular" newspaper, which is itself cradled in a wider sociopolitical context. Only in this way can the student gain a real understanding of the meaning of a newspaper text.

Taking a global approach to newspaper reading means devising exercises that not only focus on the stylistic devices used to cultivate an intended effect but which also highlight the interplay between the outer forces and the inner content. Understanding an article, a horoscope, an advertisement means synthesizing and digesting the linguistic elements as well as coming to realize the overall communicative purpose. The following exercises have been successfully used in an introductory course in newspaper reading for Chinese students. They both train students in appropriate reading skills and help to familiarize them with the role of newspapers in English-speaking countries.

Tuning in

To prepare students for reading newspapers it is advisable to get them thinking about what constitutes news and the importance of newspapers both in their own society and in the target culture. Group discussion of the following points can help create such an awareness:

- the difference between news and rumor
- newspaper-reading patterns—frequency, quantity, and range—among class members, their families, and in the nation
- transmission of news before the invention of print
- advantages and disadvantages of newspapers vs. radio/TV
- the future of newspapers
- ownership of newspapers and its significance
- ways of making uninteresting news interesting
- difficulties for foreigners in reading newspapers

Headlines

Headlines present considerable difficulties for the foreign learner on account of the telegraphic style, which obscures the underlying meaning. For native-speaker readers, headlines have the dual function of providing the briefest summary of the news and of attracting the reader's attention to the article concerned. Regular readers usually skim the headlines quickly to decide what to read in more depth. The following exercises can help the student interpret the meaning of the headlines:

a. Ask the students to form complete sentence(s) from the headlines:

KILLER DRUGS STILL ON SALE
(*Daily Mail*, Feb. 17, 1984)

Possible interpretation:
Drugs that can kill people are still on sale.

TROOPS CUT OFF PUNJAB FROM OUTSIDE WORLD
(*China Daily*, July 5, 1984)

Possible interpretation:
The Punjab has been cut off from the outside world by troops.

b. Ask the students to predict the content of the article. This can be either a group oral activity or a written exercise.

c. Cut the headlines in half. Give each student one-half. Each student must memorize his/her half. Then the students move around the class, saying their part of the headline aloud, making a mental note of possible matches. After a class pooling of the results, each student sits with his/her partner, and together they predict the content of the article.

d. One student has a short article which s/he summarizes. The other student has a headline which s/he must interpret. The students move around the class until they match their headline with an article.

e. Students are given an article which they have to summarize. Finally, they make up a headline for it.

Macrostructure of the newspaper

In order that students can place the newspaper text in its context, they should have a picture of the layout of a newspaper. Scanning questions can be devised to enable the students to find their way around the newspaper. This could be done first of all with a locally published newspaper and then with an American or British one. In this way a comparison could be made between the two newspapers. Possible scanning questions could include:

- What is the weather like in Toronto?
- What is on TV at 8:35 P.M., Friday, June 7?
- What sport was X famous for?
- On what page can you read letters to the editor?
- Where was there an earthquake recently?

After scanning the newspaper, students complete the chart below:

COLUMN	PAGE
National news	Front page
International news	
Entertainment	
Sports	Back page
Weather	
Economic news	
Letters to the Editor	Middle pages
Travel	

This will help to make explicit the way the columns are organized in the newspaper.

Next, students draw up a list of columns that appear in the American or British newspaper and compare these with either a locally printed English newspaper or a local newspaper in the source language. In groups, students discuss why different columns appear in the newspapers and what insights this gives the reader about society.

For example:

***Guardian* (Friday, Feb. 17, 1984)**
Deaths, birthdays, and marriages
Guardian women
Third World Review
Business and finance
Agenda

Quality vs. popular press

Any student of English should be familiar with the differences between the popular and quality press. The teacher can supply background information regarding circulation and ownership of such newspapers. The students can again be asked to compare the layouts of popular and quality newspapers. I have found it most effective to get the students to concentrate on the front, middle, and back pages, which are the most strategic places in the newspaper. The following questions help to focus the student's attention on some of the most apparent differences between the popular and quality press:

a. Front Page: What are the main news items? Are there any photos? Do they relate to the news on the front page? If not, why not? How much space is taken up by photos and headlines?

b. What news is reported on the back and middle pages? Why is it placed there?

c. Which newspaper has more photos? Is there any difference in the kind of photos?

d. Which newspaper tends to make greater use of a large typeface?

e. Which newspaper has more advertisements? Do they differ in the kind of products they advertise? Do they use similar advertising techniques?

Structure of article

Once the student has become acquainted with the macrostructure of the newspaper, s/he can then go on to examine the structure of an article. As a newspaper contains a range of texts, the teacher will have to select according to the students' needs. Generally, the newspaper article begins with a summary of the most dramatic or significant events. The rest of the article provides supporting details. The final paragraphs of an article can often be deleted without severely altering the meaning of the text. This also underlines the space constraints under which newspapers operate. If you ask the student to find a paragraph relating to each fact mentioned in the lead paragraph, this structure will become self-evident.

I have found it effective to ask the students to identify the function of each paragraph and to see how the whole article relates to the headline. The use of direct quotations in newspaper articles should also be pointed out as a stylistic means of creating authenticity and immediacy.

Angling the news

Newspapers vary not only in their layout and content but also in the slant they give to the news. A good exercise for making this apparent is to take two articles from different newspapers printed on the same day and compare the ways in which they present the same news. The differences are visible in the choice and ordering of facts and in the lexico-grammatical features. Such an exercise might begin by first comparing the headlines and inferring from these what stance the newspapers will adopt. For example,

CUTS? PUBLIC SPENDING IS RISING
(*Daily Express*, Feb. 17, 1984)

HIDDEN COSTS OF SPENDING 'CUTS'
(*Daily Mirror*, Feb. 17, 1984)

From this the teacher can proceed to a stylistic comparison of the text, which demands both a sensitivity to the import of words and the ability to infer.

Using horoscopes

Horoscopes lend themselves to a multiplicity of activities and are most effective as a stimulus to cross-cultural discussion of superstition and beliefs. On the methodological side, they can be used for scanning, practicing future tense, roleplay, and for writing one's own horoscope. The following questions might be useful for putting horoscopes into their global context:

- Why do newspapers print horoscopes?
- Why do they appear in the popular press but not in the quality newspapers?
- What might this tell us about the readers of these newspapers?
- Why do people read horoscopes?
- Why are the predictions correct sometimes?

It is also interesting to compare horoscopes from different newspapers printed on the same day and see if the predictions are the same. This can lead to discussion about why people believe in the horoscopes when the predictions are not valid.

Cartoons

Cartoons provide lively and entertaining material for gleaning information about the prevailing issues in society. A few squiggles of the pen combined with a subtle caption can be more poignant and forceful than a long, drawn-out article. Not only do cartoons tell the reader about current problems, but they also give insights into the cultural nature of humor. There are many ways of exploiting cartoons.

a. Students describe their picture to their partner. Then, they imagine their partner is from outer space and try to explain why the cartoon is funny.

b. Students make up captions for cartoons. The teacher cuts out the caption. Each student is given either a caption or a cartoon. The student with the cartoon has to describe it to another student. The other student listens, then reads aloud his caption. The students must decide whether the cartoon and caption match.

c. Six cartoons on a similar theme are placed together. One person in the group describes a cartoon to the others. They have to guess which one s/he is thinking of.

d. Students in groups act out the situation depicted in the cartoon. The rest of the class must guess the theme. Follow-up work could be writing out the script, group discussion of the theme, or writing letters to the editor on the same subject.

e. Students write an article to match the cartoon. Then the cartoons and articles are shuffled and distributed among groups. The students must try to match them up.

These are only some of the ways of using newspapers in the classroom. A proper understanding of a foreign newspaper can only be achieved by linking linguistic form with communicative function, by placing the isolated text into its context of the newspaper, and finally, by examining the role of the newspaper in society. A global approach is sure to lead to greater linguistic sensitivity and awareness of the sociocultural matrix. Try it and see! ■

ZAIRE

Developing Listening Comprehension and Oral Fluency via the Language Laboratory

NSAKALA LENGO

Institut Supérieur Pédagogique, Mbanza-Ngungu

Most of the students who enroll in the first year of English in our college have serious deficiencies in listening comprehension and oral communication. With the help of the language laboratory we try to solve this problem, at least in part. In a French-speaking country like ours, where students have scarcely any opportunity to meet native speakers of English, the language lab is a place where students can listen to the natural, authentic English of native speakers, and try to imitate it.

Listening: the skill in limbo

Listening comprehension may be called the pivot of speaking skills, since a person cannot respond to a speaker unless he understands what he has heard. Many language-teaching experts (Chastain 1976, Kalivoda 1980, Rivers 1980, among others) recognize the need to reinforce students' listening skills, because it is evident that many students with good speaking ability are deficient in listening comprehension. This is due largely to the fact that listening is commonly thought of as a passive skill, and thus is often neglected in favor of speaking, a productive skill. In fact, it is all too commonly believed that a person is good at English if he can speak (and possibly write) it well; we hardly ever hear people say that someone is good at English because he listens carefully. That is why, in my conversation classes in the lab, I try to habituate my students' ears to spoken English, at the same time asking them to repeat what they hear.

Nsakala Lengo is "Chef de Travaux" (senior lecturer) and head of the English department at the Institut Supérieur Pédagogique, Mbanza-Ngungu, where he teaches English grammar and conversation. He is also a part-time teacher at a local secondary school. He has taught at the Institut Supérieur Pédagogique, Kananga, and at the Centre Interdisciplinaire pour le Développement et l'Education Permanente, Kananga. He studied at the Institut Supérieur Pédagogique, Kinshasa, where he received his "licence" in English in 1978. Mr. Nsakala has published in *Annales de l'I.S.P., Kananga* and in *English Teaching Forum*.

Teaching methodology

1. *Simultaneous Listening and Oral Practice.* The students listen on their headphones to a sentence and then repeat it in chorus, while their tape recorders are recording the native speaker's and the students' voices. The sentence can be repeated more than once, depending on its level of difficulty. I usually ask my students to keep their books closed the first time they listen to the sentence, because I have noticed that when they have their books open throughout the whole class, they are less active and do not exercise their listening skills with maximum effort. Kalivoda (1980), too, emphasizes the importance of oral repetition when he says that "this simple activity tends to sharpen listening skill, because it is hard to repeat an extensive sentence without understanding what you are saying."

2. *Intonation Practice.* For intonation practice, I usually call on a student to write a sentence on the board and indicate its intonation markings (but I usually do this after the students have familiarized themselves with the intonation markings in their books, mainly in *English 901*). In this way, the students are able to master the base sentences completely, which allows them to recognize these sentences when they are spoken by any member of the class, and, more importantly, to generate new sentences on the model of these base sentences.

3. *Eliminating Difficulties.* It may happen that the majority of the students are unable to repeat an utterance because it contains new words and grammatical structures, or because they are not familiar with the pronunciation of these words. The teacher's role is to help the students master the pronunciation of these words by writing their phonetic transcription on the board. Next, the teacher should explain the new words and grammatical structures, for they are likely to block the students' comprehension if not explained. The major purpose in doing this is to enable the students "to manipulate structure consciously rather than to respond automatically" (Chastain 1976:411).

However, not all of the difficulties pertain to vocabulary. Many of them arise from the fact that the students try to understand every word of a sentence, which is not possible even in one's mother tongue. The speed at which sentences are spoken by native speakers is the greatest problem for our students. After many years of English study in secondary school, students become accustomed to what is generally referred to as "classroom dialect" (see Sittler 1975)—that is, an "artificial" variety of English where the teacher (even a native speaker of English!) speaks slowly, which is unnatural, to enable his students to understand. But where is this kind of English spoken?

Because of the speed of speech in natural English rhythm, certain consonants are obliterated (see Porter 1978), and this phenomenon is likely to mislead foreign students of English. In the sentence *A strange thing happened to me yesterday*, the alveolar consonant /d/, which is the past-tense inflection, is not sounded in connected speech, because it is followed by another similar consonant. And the student, thinking he hears the present-tense form *happen*, may be confused, expecting the past tense since the past tense is clearly predicted by the adverb *yesterday*. In addition, contractions occur in rapid speech, and vowels are weakened in unstressed syllables. This phenomenon is so usual in speech that students need to be alerted to it. One day I called on a student to write the sentence /ˈðiːzəˈbuks/ on the board; he wrote *These a books* instead of *These are books*, and most of the students insisted that this was what they had heard, in spite of its unacceptability. The difficulty for them was that the verb *are* tends to have the same pronunciation as the indefinite article *a* in rapid speech.[1] To overcome this stumbling block, students should be taught to select key words, which carry the meaning of a sentence. Not all words in a sentence are equally important. An inflection or

1. EDITOR'S NOTE: In American English, the /r/ would usually be heard, at least slightly: /ˈðiːzərˈbuks/.

an article, which can be guessed according to the context, will not have the same importance as a noun, a verb, or an adjective. The students do not know this in the beginning. They try to grasp every word—if not every sound—and so lose the thread of the sentence.

The language laboratory provides a means of solving problems related to speed. The teacher can replay the tape whenever he notices that the majority of the students have failed to understand a sentence. If the students are unable to repeat an utterance after listening to it two or three times, it is not necessary for the teacher to go on replaying the tape: there is obviously a problem. In this case, he can repeat the utterance for them and perhaps write it on the board, for it is easier for the students to understand the teacher than the native speaker on the tape. One reason for this is that the students can follow the movements of the teacher's lips, which they can't do with the speaker on the tape because they can't see him. Another reason is that the students are familiar with their teacher's speech.

4. *Teaching Vocabulary through Substitution Drills.* One of the advantages of substitution drills is that they enable the students to acquire new words in meaningful contexts. As Wilcox (1979) suggests, a new word is internalized better when it is used in a phrase showing "the *grammatical* environment of the word and the types of *words* that are most often *associated* with it." For example, in the sentence *A strange thing happened to me yesterday*, the adjective *strange* can be replaced by *odd, interesting, funny, peculiar,* or *amazing*, where it is clear to the students that it is an adjective because of its attributive position before a noun. Next, the teacher can show that the noun *thing* in this context can be replaced by the noun *situation* or *experience*, for example, and that it is likely to be followed by the verb *happen* or *occur*. Finally, the teacher can point out that the verb *happen* is accompanied by the preposition *to*. In addition, these substitution drills help the students acquire new words that are interrelated in that they are unified around a given topic, say, "Talking about Past Experiences," "Asking about Furniture and Places to Live," "Talking about Things to Wear," etc.

5. *Listening Comprehension Check-up.* One procedure I have found useful for checking my students' audial comprehension is the transformation drill. Here the students are required to write down their responses. But before beginning the exercise I usually give them one or two examples to make sure that they understand what they have to do. The drill usually consists of transforming statements into negative sentences and questions, active sentences into passive ones, etc. At the end I collect the papers in order to mark them at home, and I usually begin the next laboratory session with correction of the previous exercise.

I have also found it useful to ask my students to summarize a passage that they have heard on their headphones. For better audial comprehension, I replay the tape. This is a very good exercise, because unlike irksomely automatic repetition, it enables the students to exercise their minds. It is important to point out that I always give marks for these exercises. Students are fully motivated only when they know that their work will be marked, and it is preferable that the teacher inform them of their marks so as to make them aware of their strengths and/or weaknesses. The marks that I give them are: *very good, good, average, weak,* and *very weak*.

6. *Communication Practice.* Since the language laboratory does not provide a well-defined design for communication practice, it is up to the teacher to organize materials that will reinforce the students' communication skills.

Some teachers hold that students should be allowed to communicate only when they have had sufficient training in pattern practice. Implicit in this assertion is the belief that students should not be given the opportunity to make mistakes right at the beginning. I disagree with this view; I allow my students to practice communication from the very beginning. I usually do this after we have completed the listening-repetition stage and the substitution and/or transformation drills, by calling on two students to communicate on the topic we have just studied. The students respond enthusiastically to this exercise. I should point out that I don't interrupt them while they are talking. If they make mistakes, I simply write the correct forms on the board, and when they have finished, I ask the whole class to repeat the correct forms after me.

Since this does not give all the students an opportunity to practice communication, I usually assign a communication exercise to the entire class. I take the part of the first speaker, and the students the second speaker. I say something, and then ask them to imagine what might be the response to what I have said, and write it down. At the end of the exercise, I collect the papers and pick out the best ones to be practiced again.

At the beginning of the second semester, I usually ask the students to prepare a debate on a given motion. I choose one student as Chairman, another as Proposer, a third as Opposer, a fourth as Third Speaker, and a fifth as Fourth Speaker. I ask them not to write their speeches out, but simply to use notes that will help them remember the important ideas. After the principal speakers have spoken, the Chairman asks his classmates to participate in the discussion, and this is carried out in a disciplined way (one must raise his hand to ask permission to speak). Here again I don't intervene. My role is limited to pointing out mistakes that the students make in pronunciation and grammar, and informing them of these mistakes at the end of the debate. It is better not to make these remarks during the debate, because they are likely to dampen the students' enthusiasm in the discussion. Most of the students enjoy this exercise because it gives them the freedom to say what they think. It is true that "to get a person to think in a foreign language and to use it in communication" he must be given "something serious to think about" (Diller 1978:77).

7. *Which Variety of English to Teach?* It is true that "the English language is . . . not a single language, but many languages, each of which belongs to a particular geographical area or to a particular kind of situation" (Leech and Svartvik 1979:21). In my opinion, and in that of many, EFL students should become familiar with British and American English, because these are the most influential varieties of English in our modern world. It would be a waste of time to teach my students, for example, Australian English, which they are never likely to hear or need to use in actual communication.

Leech and Svartvik point out that there are different varieties of English—that is, degrees of formality—that accord with the different situations the user of the language may find himself in. My conversation course is designed with the informal conversational variety in mind, since it is what the students are likely to hear when they come in contact with a native speaker. Formal English is not discarded from our departmental curriculum. Far from it! Students are exposed to the various degrees of formality in their grammar course, for example; but the language laboratory, as a means for strengthening listening comprehension and oral fluency, focuses on spoken English. Here students are given the opportunity to familiarize themselves with such features as hesitation fillers (*e.g., well, er, uh*), attention claimers (*e.g., hey, look*), repetition, interjections, tag questions, etc., which are characteristic of spoken English.

Conclusion

Language learning accomplishes its full purpose only when students are able to actually use the language; otherwise it becomes meaningless. But does the language laboratory provide students with this ability? It is obvious that the language laboratory concentrates on pattern practice, and it is here that the teacher's role should be stressed. The success of a language-laboratory session is contingent on the way the teacher uses the lab, not on the lab itself.

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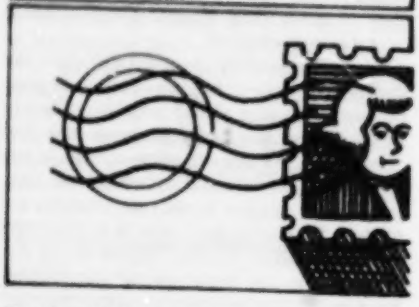
Letters



Readers Meet

Dear Sirs,

I have been a faithful reader of *Forum* for about four years. I consider it a valuable help for improving the quality of TESOL and for establishing links with other teachers.

Thanks to *Forum*, a few weeks ago I met Professor W. Butzkamm—professor at RWTH in Aachen, Germany. We met through *Forum* although I have been a teacher of English for 10 years at Collège Notre Dame in Gemmenich, situated in Belgium next to the Dutch and German borders—only a few kilometers from Aachen! We made a video recording of a lesson together. This would never have happened without *Forum*.

I wish you all the best for the new year.

JEAN SCHMITZ
Belgium

Teacher Training: Theory vs. Practice

Dear Ms. Newton,

I read with interest the comments on EFL/ESL teacher training by Dr. Brudhiprabha, in the April 1985 number.

Many of the writer's observations struck me as extremely well-founded, perhaps above all his emphases on encouraging trainees to see EFL/ESL in the context of the society and the curriculum as a whole, and on setting EFL/ESL training into the broader perspective of an overall system of "general teacher education."

Nonetheless, I would like to suggest that one issue is not mentioned explicitly (although it may well have been in the back of Dr. Brudhiprabha's mind), and I think it deserves direct attention. This is the issue of *theoretical preparation*. I am well aware that badly balanced training programs have been—or at least are often said to have been—too theoretical and not practical enough. There is obviously no doubt that teaching is above all a practical activity; good in-class methods are essential, and theoretical knowledge will not make up for practical deficiencies. But it remains true that good practicians are *flexible*, and flexibility of an informed sort is very largely made possible by a good theoretical background.

The way the letter presents the issues, it might be understood that knowledge of psycholinguistics and of sociolinguistics would fall into a separate category from knowledge of language structure, which is specifically required to have "practical usefulness in the . . . classroom." Surely, one of the key steps towards creativity and independence in EFL/ESL work in non-English-speaking countries (and particularly, in developing nations) is a confident feeling of full participation in *all* aspects of the field. Such confidence, which both motivates and improves the classroom teacher, depends to a great extent on helping trainees grasp the *power* that is available to the teacher who can comfortably move from theory to practice in ways that benefit both domains.

Possibly this connection is what was intended by Dr. Brudhiprabha; he dealt with so many important concerns in his information-filled letter that it may well be that my particular concern was simply underemphasized and not really omitted or negated. In any case, I do feel that it is a facet of EFL/ESL training that—although *not* easy—can only be overlooked to the detriment of our profession and to the disadvantage of our trainees.

JOHN N. SIVELL
Canada

EFL Software

Dear *Forum* Readers:

After reading John Higgins' excellent article, "Can Computers Teach?" in the July 1985 *Forum*, I would like to inform *Forum* readers of some excellent software available for Apple computers.

At the University College of Bahrain (UCB) we are using the LANGUAGE PLUS computer-aided learning system. This system was designed by EFL teachers specifically for EFL teaching. Teachers create the exercises by typing text material into a simple word processor. Many EFL teachers at UCB with no previous computer experience have written some very useful exercises with this system.

The system has six lesson types. Four of these, SCRAMBLED SENTENCES, SCRAMBLED PARAGRAPH, CLOZE, and INSERT A WORD, fit Mr. Higgins' description of pedagogue-type activities. The other two types, QUIZ and SPEED SPELLING, are magister type (but still quite useful). The system is available from Mallard Educational Systems, No. 21, 826 10th St. So., Minneapolis, Minn. 55404.

For adventure games, I recommend the World of EAMON adventure series. The series contains a variety of fairly simple adventure games and a set of utility programs that allow you to easily modify or rewrite the descriptions contained in the adventures to simplify content, emphasize structures, make the descriptions more relevant to your students, etc.

The EAMON series is public-domain software, which can be copied and distributed without copyright violation; it is available from Apple Avocation Alliance, Inc., 721 Pike Street, Cheyenne, Wyo. 82009, USA. If you send me blank disks (maximum 10) and postage, I will gladly copy some of the games we have and return them to you.

TOM ROSS
Computer-Aided-Learning Specialist
University College of Bahrain
Box 1082
Bahrain

A Request for Materials

Dear Sirs,

Since English is rarely taught for Indonesian elementary students, it's difficult for me as a teacher to find any suitable handbooks, syllabus, or curriculum.

Will any readers of the *Forum* kindly help me?

Thank you.

MASWIR
Cendana School
Rumbai, Pekanbaru
Indonesia

Free Conversation in English

Dear Editor:

I have taught English to adults for more than 18 years, and I'd like to tell you about some procedures I have used in trying to achieve really free conversation in English. (By "free" I mean beyond the stage where the

student thinks in his native tongue and then translates into the foreign language.)

Two years ago I taught an intensive course (12 classes a week for two years) to a group of adult students 25–30 years of age. There were 11 of them, all beginners. In the second year I taught the so-called "conversation" classes. In reality, every foreign-language class is a conversation class; therefore, it was difficult to find interesting topics for such special "conversation" classes—topics you can talk about for two hours without getting bored. Everyone knows that in learning a foreign language the most difficult problem is not only how to say something but *what* to say. It seems as if all imagination and inspiration vanish. Therefore, I drew up a list of topics: history, geography, arts, etc.

In the lesson about the United States I realized that it was impossible for just one student to cover the subject—or even several, in the few hours at our disposal. So I asked each student to deal with one aspect (political, cultural, economic, social, etc.), to read about it, take notes, and talk about it in front of the class. (Of course, I gave the students all the advice they requested concerning a bibliography, etc.) Following these talks there were questions from the other students, and the discussions were lively. The purpose of this approach was to have the students speak for a longer time than usual (at least 10–15 minutes) in front of others—and of course there were informational and cultural benefits as well.

Another time I brought to class *The History of Painting*. After some introductory talk about painting (whether they liked it or not, who their favorite artist was—classical or modern—what museums they liked to visit and how often, etc.), I showed them some pictures without mentioning the title or the name of the painter. I asked them to tell what they saw in the picture, what the subject was, what the style was, who they thought had painted it, etc.

The result was marvelous! Everybody tried to talk as much as possible; each one wanted to be listened to. We had a lot of fun, and all in English! I had succeeded in getting them to say in the foreign language what was really on their minds, without the process of thinking first in the mother tongue and then translating into the foreign language.

Another time I read aloud in class the Tennessee Williams play *The Bed of Petunias*. But I read only two-thirds of it, giving the students the new phrases and idioms, discussing it, etc. Their homework assignment was to write the end of the play as they imagined it. My purpose was to give them practice in expressing their own thoughts in writing as well as in speaking. At the next lesson we read and discussed all the papers (which unfortunately were not very long). Finally, of course, I read aloud the original ending of the play. The students enjoyed it very much and even dared to criticize the author!

Another time I tried to have the students talk about music, but this was much more difficult, and I gave up on that subject. I think it is important for a teacher to know when to drop a topic, even if he has spent a lot of time preparing it. The most important thing is to have exciting lessons, at the end of which the students do not feel tired or bored.

Very interesting also were the lessons in which we discussed quotations from famous people. The students freely expressed their opinions and told of their own relevant experiences. (Remember that these students were grown-ups.)

As you see, these are not sophisticated methods; they do not use any particularly modern techniques, but depend on the imaginative skill of the teacher. They don't incur any expense or require any special equipment.

Finally, I confess my deep feeling that we teachers invest in every pupil a little of our soul, of our own hopes and personality.

RODICA VERNEA
Romania

Request for a Bibliography

Dear Editor:

I would like to thank you for editing such a useful magazine. I have always treated it as a guide when preparing for classes. I really enjoy *Forum;* it is helpful and interesting.

I collect books used by teachers of English, and I am looking for articles about the functional-notional approach in the teaching of business English and secretarial training.

If any *Forum* readers would be able to send me a bibliography of books on this subject, I would be most grateful.

Thank you, in advance.

ERNESTINA SMITH DE WESLEY
Escuela Profesional "Isabel Herrera Obaldía"
Apartado 1896
Panama City 1, Panama

Al-Manakh Resumes Publication

Dear Editor,

After an interruption of three years, *Al-Manakh*, the journal of the Language Centre of Kuwait University, is to resume publication. Two or three editions a year will be published.

Al-Manakh publishes original articles, book reviews, etc., written both by Kuwait University staff and others, and which reflect the wide range of work carried out within the Language Centre of our University and similar institutions. It also seeks to act as a forum for language teaching within the Middle East and beyond, and has a circulation of over 500 that includes all five continents.

I would like to invite contributions on any of the following topics: teaching methodology; (applied) linguistics; testing; syllabus and curriculum design; language description; educational technology; book reviews; conference reports, etc.

I am also attempting to update our list of subscribers. Any information concerning changes of address of subscribers or potential new subscribers will be welcomed.

DAVID NEWBY
Editor, *Al-Manakh*
Journal of the Language Centre
P.O. Box 5486
Kuwait University
Kuwait

Subject Matter Teaching

Dear Editor:

Throughout my teaching experience and after reading all the new theories about language learning and acquisition, I've found that one good way to teach English (EFL) is what Krashen calls "Subject Matter Teaching" in his book *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition* (Pergamon). Although it is not a direct way of teaching English, I believe it is a good way to motivate people to learn English. The class should consist of a group of people who want to learn a specific subject, let's say photography.

The material provided for the course, as well as the lectures, would be in English only. This means that the teacher has to know not only English but also her subject—in this case photography. The students ought to be adults and deeply interested in the subject. There is no need for them to know English at the beginning; as soon as they become more and more involved with the subject they will certainly feel the need to learn English, thus fulfilling two goals: learning English and learning the subject matter.

I would also like to be included in the list of teachers who want to correspond with other teachers.

MARTHA LUCIA PULIDO CORREA
English Literature Teacher
Colegio Marymount
Medellín, Colombia

Teaching Beginners

Dear Editor:

Everywhere in the world, English teachers are trying to find better and easier ways to give more with less effort. In the Brazilian system, most teachers begin teaching the auxiliaries, which I believe difficult and wrong. I have tried to start with a different auxiliary instead of BE, HAVE, and DO. I chose CAN. This limits the possibility of mistakes the pupil can make.

This is how my system works. The first lesson would be more or less like this: *I can speak English. You can speak Portuguese. Pablo can speak Spanish. Bruno can speak Italian. Pauline can speak French.* The teacher can ask *Who can speak French?*, etc. Pictures of people from different countries could be used.

The second lesson could be *about food!* I can eat Brazilian food: rice, beans, meat. John can eat English food: hot dogs, hamburgers, salad. Bruno can eat Italian food: spaghetti, pizzas . . . etc. The teacher can ask questions involving a great number of words related to food.

The third lesson could follow the same pattern, using *numbers* with the two verbs COME and GO: I can come by plane at *one* o'clock. You can go by bus at *two* o'clock. John can come by ship at *three*, etc.

Only when the pupils have a vocabulary of more than 500 words, should the teacher begin to teach the auxiliaries. My idea is that at first the pupil will be interested in learning *words* and in seeing that he can speak without grammar difficulties. I wanted to share with readers of *Forum* my experience of more than thirty years of teaching and finally finding a method that seems to be easy and right.

HERMINIA OTTICICA
Brazil

TEACHER CORRESPONDENTS

I am 29 years old and am interested in reading books, art, ballet, listening to music, and traveling. I speak English, Russian, and Arabic.

EUGENIUSZ SWIECH
ul. 3-GO Maja 23
05-320 Mrozy
Poland

I am a young teacher of English. My hobbies include swimming, corresponding, dancing, and listening to music.

Miss NURGUN KESKINER
Umumi mag. T.A.S.
P.O. Box 159
Iskenderun/Hatay
Turkey

I teach English at a government school in Sri Lanka. My interests include reading, traveling, listening to music, and learning foreign languages.

ROHITHA SAMARASEKERA
"Yamuna"
Pathegama, Kottegoda
Sri Lanka

I would like to correspond with other teachers in order to exchange ideas, coins, postcards, and stamps.

GABRIELA CARRASCO
Lirio de Correos
Suc. A, Cd. Satélite
53100, E.M.
Mexico

I'm a primary school English teacher, age 33. My hobbies are composing songs in English for my students, reading books, gardening, and traveling.

METKA KARBA
Cesta v Rotopek 113
62 531 Kamnica pri Mariboru
Yugoslavia

I am a teacher of English in Argentina, age 46. I want to correspond with other teachers around the world. My interests include literature and customs from other countries.

ESTHER ALTMAN DE SLUTSKY
Irigoyen 1686
3400 Corrientes
Argentina

I have been a teacher of English for eight years in a secondary school. I would like to correspond with other teachers.

Mr. SIRICHAK NOONKHKHETKHONG
126/3 Ban noonsrinawasdi
Sriboonyasatid Road
Amphur Muang, Mahasarakam
44000 Thailand

Please include my name in your list of teachers who want to correspond.

RICARDO R. QUIDATO
Lanao del Norte Agricultural College
Karomatan, Lanao del Norte 8806
Philippines

I would be very happy if you include my name in your teacher correspondents list.

MILAGROS P. MARUHOM
c/o N. G. Pambuena
207 Suarez, Iligan City
Philippines

Please include me in the list of teachers who would like to exchange their views on the teaching and learning of English.

B. S. YEBEAA
University College of Agriculture
Alemaya, Box 138
Dire Dawa
Ethiopia

Please add my name to the list of teachers who would like to correspond. I teach EFL to children and adults.

K. RAVENEL SUDA
P.O. Box 625
Bandung
Indonesia

I teach English in a secondary school in the north of Thailand. I am interested in corresponding with teachers all over the world in order to exchange ideas and to improve my English.

Ms. SUPAPORN JANSIRIYOTIN
Khelang Nakorn School
Amphur Muang
Lampang 52000
Thailand

I would like to have my name and address published in the list of correspondents.

RAMAZAN HAKAN
Selçuk Üniversitesi
Eğitim Fakültesi
İngilizce Bölümü
Konya/Turkey

BOOKS RECEIVED

AZAR, BETTY SCHRAMPFER. *Fundamentals of English Grammar.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1985. xvi + 345 pages.

BRAUN, SHIRLEY W. *Life in English.* New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984. xv + 206 pages.

CELCE-MURCIA, MARIANNE. *Beyond Basics. Issues and research in TESOL.* Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1985. xiv + 209 pages.

CRAMER, NANCY ARAPOFF. *The Writing Process.* Twenty projects for group work. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1985. viii + 331 pages.

LANCELOT-HARRINGTON, KATHERINE. *America Past & Present.* Vol. III, The Continuing Quest. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1985. xi + 251 pages.

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SALIMBENE, SUZANNE. *Strengthen Your Study Skills!* Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1985. x + 157 pages.

The ENGLISH TEACHING FORUM, a quarterly journal for the teacher of English outside the United States, is distributed abroad by American embassies. Questions about subscriptions should be addressed to the American Embassy in the capital city of the country in which the inquirer resides. Only manuscripts and letters to the editor on topics other than subscription may be sent to Room 312, 301 4th Street S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547. To be considered for publication, manuscripts should be typewritten, double-spaced, and have margins of at least three centimeters. Manuscripts should also be accompanied by a statement indicating whether they have been offered for publication elsewhere.

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FORUM

25th Anniversary Survey

Dear FORUM Reader:

As part of the ENGLISH TEACHING FORUM's 25th anniversary celebration, we plan to publish in a future issue the results of this reader survey. The purpose of the questionnaire is twofold: (1) to enable us to become better acquainted with our readers and their professional needs and preferences; (2) to give readers an opportunity to make suggestions that may help us improve the FORUM's contents.

The success of the survey depends on how well each reader responds. Therefore, we urge you to send in your completed questionnaire as soon as possible (and, to be included in the statistics, no later than 1 June 1986). Each response will be individually acknowledged by the FORUM staff. The results will be tabulated and published in one of the early issues for 1987, which will also include the names of all readers who respond (except for any who may ask that their name be omitted).

If you need more space for your answers, please continue them in block 38 on the reverse. When you have completed the questionnaire, fold it on the dotted lines and staple or tape it closed; be sure to attach proper postage before mailing.

Anne C. Hewson

1. *(Optional)*
   Name: _____
   Address: _____
   _____
   _____
   Would you like your name to be published? ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. ☐ Male ☐ Female Age_____ Nationality _____

3. What is your native language? _____

4. What is your highest degree or diploma? _____

5. What is your status?
   ☐ Classroom teacher ☐ Teacher trainer
   ☐ Administrator ☐ Textbook writer
   ☐ Other (specify) _____

6. What age group do you work with?
   ☐ University or other tertiary ☐ Adults
   ☐ Secondary (high school) ☐ Young children
   ☐ Jr. high school (11–14 yrs.) ☐ Other (specify) _____

7. Do you teach mostly:
   ☐ Advanced level ☐ Beginning level
   ☐ Intermediate level ☐ Other (specify) _____

FOLD HERE

8. How many years have you taught English?
   ☐ 0–2 yrs. ☐ 3–5 yrs. ☐ 6–10 yrs. ☐ more than 10 yrs.

9. Did you have pre-service training in TEFL? ☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Do you receive formal in-service training?
    ☐ At least once every 2 or 3 yrs. ☐ Once in 5 yrs.
    ☐ Less than once in 5 yrs. ☐ Never

11. How many students do you have in a class?
    ☐ 1–30 ☐ 31–50 ☐ 51–100 ☐ more than 100

12. What methodology did you use when you began teaching English?
    ☐ Grammar translation ☐ Communicative approach
    ☐ Audiolingual/structural ☐ Audiovisual
    ☐ A combination of 2 or more ☐ Eclectic
    ☐ Other (describe) _____

13. Have you changed your method since you started teaching?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No If so, how? _____
    _____

14. Do the requirements of your syllabus allow you to introduce materials that you devise or acquire on your own? ☐ Yes ☐ No

15. What teaching aids do you use?
    ☐ Textbook ☐ Overhead Projector ☐ Blackboard
    ☐ Tape recorder ☐ Radio ☐ TV ☐ Other

16. Do you belong to any professional organizations?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No Which ones? _____
    _____

17. What other TEFL journals do you read regularly? _____
    _____

18. Do you have an area of specialization in the TEFL field? _____
    _____

19. What is the status of English in your country?
    ☐ Essential in education or business
    ☐ Useful in finding a job
    ☐ Other (specify) _____

20. At what age do students in your country usually begin their study of English? _____

21. What variety of English do you teach?
    ☐ American ☐ British ☐ Other (specify) _____

22. How long have you been reading the FORUM?
    ☐ 1 yr. or less ☐ 2–5 yrs. ☐ 6–10 yrs. ☐ more than 10 yrs.

23. To what extent do you read these sections of the FORUM?

	In detail	Somewhat	Not at all
Main articles			
News & ideas articles			
Editorials			
Lighter Side Page			
Non-TEFL articles			
Letters			

FOLD HERE

24. What is your main reason for reading the FORUM?
    ☐ To keep abreast of developments in TEFL
    ☐ To find ideas to use in the classroom
    ☐ To use in in-service training
    ☐ Other _____

25. Do you use the recorded discs?
    ☐ For your own listening ☐ In your classes

26. How useful are they to you?
    ☐ Very useful ☐ Somewhat useful ☐ Not useful
    Why? _____
    _____
    What would be more useful? _____
    _____

27. Which recorded disc(s) have you found most useful?
    1. _____ 2. _____
    Least useful?
    1. _____ 2. _____

28. What kind of poster, chart, etc., would you like the FORUM to include for classroom display or use? _____
    _____

29. Do you receive your own issue of the FORUM? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If so, do you share it with one or more colleagues? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If not, how do you gain access to it? ☐ Library ☐ Colleagues
    ☐ School department ☐ Other _____
    _____

30. Which type of article interests you most?
    ☐ Specific teaching techniques ☐ Methodology ☐ Language analysis or grammar ☐ Listening comprehension material (disc) ☐ Broad philosophical articles ☐ Games, songs, etc.
    ☐ Teaching literature ☐ English for science and technology
    ☐ Other (specify) _____
    _____

31. Which type of article are you least interested in? _____
    _____

32. Do you think most of the articles are:
    ☐ Too difficult to understand ☐ Too simple
    ☐ At about the right level of difficulty

33. Which issue of the FORUM is your all-time favorite (and why)?
    _____
    _____

34. Which issue of the FORUM did you like the least (and why)?
    _____
    _____

35. Do you use the indexes? ☐ Yes ☐ No

36. Can you apply to your classes the techniques that you find in the FORUM? ☐ Yes ☐ No If not, why? _____
    _____

continued on reverse

From: _____

ATTACH POSTAGE

ENGLISH TEACHING FORUM
Washington, D.C. 20547
U.S.A.

10. Do you have any additional comments or questions?

11. What suggestions have you for improving the FORUM?

STAPLE OR TAPE CLOSED

"The Lighter Side"

Forum Trivia

How well do you know the *Forum*?

1. In what year was the *Forum* first published?
2. Without looking, can you name the volume number of this issue?
3. How many *Forum* staff members are named on the first page of this issue?
4. How many times a year is the *Forum* published? In what months is it published?
5. Who designed the dymaxion airocean globe that appeared in the October 1984 issue?
6. What are the initials of the present editor?
7. What famous American writer appeared on the cover of the January 1985 issue? Name three other famous writers who have been featured in the *Forum*.
8. When was the Lighter Side Page first included in the *Forum*?
9. What issue each year regularly contains a recorded disc?
10. How many Shaggy Dog stories were there?
11. Who was the first editor of the *Forum*?
12. What American president appeared on a cover of the *Forum*?
13. Name two plays by Richard Via that have appeared in the *Forum*.
14. In the *Forum* logo, what words appear inside the letter O?
15. What is the worldwide circulation of the *Forum*?
    - ☐ 10,000
    - ☐ 55,000
    - ☐ 110,000
    - ☐ 310,000

What did one math book say to the other? "Don't bother me. I have my own problems."

Teacher: "What word in the English language contains all the vowels?"
Student: "Is there really such a word?"
Teacher: "Unquestionably."

If the world is getting smaller, why do they keep raising postal rates?

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FORUM

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Motivation Again

Motivation, like Cerberus, reared not one but three heads last week. So we paused to consider an old, old subject.

A reader in Spain sent us a manuscript with the word "motivation" in the title. Our first reaction was a bored "Oh, that again!" But as we began to read it we changed our mind. The writer's energetic, innovative, and wise approach to finding activities that would appropriately motivate her students caught our interest. Nothing so very new or different from what many teachers have done—nothing unusual or avant garde. But that is just the point: the activities she described are within the reach of many teachers and classrooms, and therefore, we thought, worth sharing with *Forum* readers. (The article will appear in a future issue.)

What really caught our interest, though, was what the writer had to say about motivating the teacher. Do we, as teachers, think enough about *our own* motivation? That may be the most important question. Our own experience as a fledgling teacher—and as a more experienced one—points in this direction. The love of teaching—that is, the delight of imparting to students the joy of learning—inspires us to seek and find ways to make our students' experience a happy and fruitful one, just so far as this is possible within the limitations imposed by circumstances.

While we were thinking on these things, conversations with two quite different language learners (who were also language teachers) showed us again how a learner's motivation, together with intelligent and disciplined application, can make all the difference between failure and success in learning a new language.

The first was an American colleague who was studying Italian prior to going to that country. Her learning conditions were favorable in that she had competent native-speaking Italian teachers. Nevertheless, the time for learning the language was limited, and in order to hasten her progress she added to her classwork the self-imposed homework of going over and over, to the point of mastery, certain morphologically difficult forms—habit-forming, tiresome, uncommunicative practice. She is convinced that this dogged, repetitious work—combined, of course, with the communicative practice she had in class—contributed substantially to the proficiency she quickly gained in the new language.

About the same time we talked with a young man from China who is now in the United States working toward an advanced degree. Although his pronunciation was strongly accented, his English was remarkably fluent and accurate, and he was able to express complex, sophisticated ideas as well as to engage in conversational "small talk" in correct, idiomatic English. His response to our question as to how he had learned English so well (he has been in this country but a short time) revealed a highly motivated learner's intuitions as to how to help himself become a good speaker of the language even in unfavorable conditions. The methods his teachers had used were, by today's generally accepted standards, wholly inadequate to produce a competent speaker (and comprehender) of the language: copying and repeating isolated words from a blackboard and other similarly uncommunicative activities. He realized, he said, that if he were to make any practical headway toward learning the language well enough to use it outside the classroom, it was up to him to devise the best kind of practice he could. Since there was no one with whom to carry on a conversation in English, he told us, "I went home and talked to the wall" about all the things he had done during the day—thus learning to converse with himself and by himself.

It worked. When he first came to the United States to study at a West Coast university, he was, of course, frightened at the prospect of not being able to understand or be understood, but he soon found that he was able to converse with ease. His self-imposed conversational method—and hard work—paid off. It probably made all the difference between being overwhelmed by linguistic failure and enjoying success in his studies and everyday life in a very foreign country.

Much has been said, and more still can and will be said, about affective filters, integrative versus instrumental motivation, real versus realistic language practice, acquisition versus learning, and all the pros and cons of a variety of methods and techniques. Quietly in the background, one thought seems to persist. Of the three essential ingredients for learning to speak "with the tongues of men"—method, matter, and motivation, these three—it may just be that the greatest of these is motivation.

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Anne Covell Newton
Editor

Mary Jo Ilacqua Boya
Managing Editor

Susan Gail Pollock
Editorial Assistant

Helaine Michaels-Klein
Production Assistant

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Teaching Reported Speech

MICHELE C. GUERRINI
Mangold-Santillana, S.A., Madrid

MICHELE C. GUERRINI is English editor for Mangold-Santillana publishing company, where she is responsible for EFL materials development at the primary and secondary school level. She has taught EFL in Spain and the United States. She was a professor of EFL methodology at a Madrid teachers college from 1978 to 1981 and has conducted teacher-training workshops throughout Spain. Dr. Guerrini is particularly interested in communicative aspects of language teaching and in creating materials that facilitate communicative small-group and pair work in the classroom. She has published several articles in Spanish journals for EFL teachers and is coauthor of a series of textbooks for technical-school students.

In recent years language teaching has come to mean teaching people to communicate: how to express feelings and attitudes, exchange facts, and socialize in the target language.[1] Obviously, student needs and interests play a crucial role in this communicative approach to language teaching insofar as the teacher must develop learning activities that provide the language necessary to communicate these needs and interests. For this reason, the activities employed will often be the result of careful analysis of the language students will need. Even teachers who must adhere to a syllabus defined more in terms of "forms" students must "know" than language behavior they can demonstrate can incorporate communicative activities into the lesson.

This article will examine the teaching of reported speech from two perspectives: one that emphasizes student mastery of language forms and another, more communicative, approach that facilitates student use of reported speech in a natural way to communicate with others. Examples of reported-speech activities that meet the specifications established for communicative activities will be discussed.

The teacher who sets out to deal with reported speech communicatively will probably formulate at least three questions before actually planning a lesson. First of all, how has reported speech customarily been taught? In other words, what types of activities do we find in many textbooks? What are they designed to teach? What do they require students to *do?* Do grammar presentations and structural activities have a place in a teaching plan that emphasizes communication? If so, where? Second, when in daily life do we report on what we have heard or said? What functions do we fulfill when reporting speech? Finally, after taking all our previous conclusions into account, what characteristics should be present in activities designed to teach reported speech communicatively?

Here then are three broad topics to be examined: (1) How is reported speech usually taught? (2) When do we use reported speech? (3) How can reported speech be taught communicatively?

TRADITIONAL TEACHING ACTIVITIES

Characteristics of traditional activities

Before the current emphasis on teaching language for communication, most materials writers were primarily

1. Although much has been written on the subject of teaching language for the purpose of communication, one of the clearest and best presentations is that made by Henry Widdowson in *Teaching Language as Communication* (Oxford University Press, 1978). See J. A. van Ek, *Threshold Level English* (Council of Europe, 1975) for a complete description of the communicative functions and notions referred to here.

concerned with manipulation of grammatical forms. As a result, chapters dedicated to "Reporting Speech" invariably contained charts accompanied by explanations of the rules governing the transformation of direct statements, questions, and commands into their reported-speech equivalent. For example:

Direct Speech	*Reported Speech*
1. I'm leaving at 8:00 P.M.	Mary said she was leaving at 8:00 P.M.
2. Is John tall?	She wants to know if John is tall.
3. Where do you live?	He wants to know where I live. He asked me where I live.
4. Give this to Peter, please.	She asked me to give that to Peter.

These traditional exercises required the student to transform a number of often unrelated direct statements, questions, or requests into reported speech by applying the rules provided. Back-shifting, conversion of pronoun forms, and the problem posed by expressing words common to direct speech but rare in reported speech (*please, oh?, really?*) constitute major pitfalls for most students, so all were amply represented in exercises.

Limitations of traditional exercises

Examining these traditional exercises from a communicative perspective, we notice several limitations. First, student participation is often limited to application of rules. Interesting discussions often spring up around the acceptability of alternative solutions to the exercise items—"Is *He wants to know where I live* the same as *He wanted to know where I lived?*"—but in the end students may actually spend more time TALKING ABOUT language than USING language to communicate.

Second, traditional exercise items lack a defined context. For example, with relation to item 4 above, the student does not know WHO was asked to give something to Peter. Even if this point was clarified—John said to Mary, "Give this to Peter, please"—the student would still not know WHY the request was made or WHAT PART it might play in the larger communication situation that gave rise to it.

Third, traditional exercises that provide a context, although more realistic, continue to be deficient from a communicative point of view. For example, the student may assume the role of a lawyer or witness at a court trial who reports an earlier conversation.[2] The conversations prepared for these exercises sound natural, but the student does not control the content; consequently, relevance to his or her interests and needs may be lacking.

The role of traditional exercises in a communicative classroom

Despite their shortcomings, exercises that emphasize manipulation of grammatical forms *do* merit a place in any lesson plan that claims communication as its goal. Communication depends to a large degree on form, so serious breakdown in grammar control frequently leads to a parallel breakdown in communication: *He wants him to leave* conveys quite a different meaning from *He wants to know if he is leaving.*[3] In other words, students will find it difficult to report speech if they cannot control the mechanics of back-shifting, pronoun reference, verb forms, etc. Learning how to transmit a message accurately so that it is not misinterpreted requires considerable practice, some of which will necessarily be of a manipulative, mechanical nature.

Sequencing traditional and communicative exercises

Having established that exercises designed to practice form are necessary in a communicative teaching plan, the teacher must decide when they should be introduced. Traditionally, teachers have planned learning activities to progress from more controlled to less controlled exercises. This means that early in the lesson plan the teacher exposes the students to the "rules" and provides intensive practice in the mechanics of direct-reported-speech transformations and then, later on, gradually guides students from manipulating forms towards free expression.

One alternative to this teaching sequence places students immediately into the situation of reporting speech and lets them handle the task as best they can with whatever resources they already possess. Naturally, mistakes are made and many students may not communicate their messages at all. Nevertheless, this sequence has the distinct advantage of placing the student and his/her resources at the center of the lesson. In other words, once students have tried to report speech, the teacher—and the students—have acquired insights that will enable them to plan the next learning step much more efficiently. In this sequence, the teacher functions

2. D. H. Spencer offers a variety of amusing passages that the student must relate as they might be told by one of the characters involved in the original narrative. See *Guided Composition Exercises* (Longman, 1967).

3. Brendan Carroll summarized the effects of overemphasis on either *usage* (formal language patterns) or *use* (communicative function) this way: "The *usage* emphasis could result in a mastery of sentence patterns coupled with an inability to use them in day-to-day communication; the *use* emphasis could lead to fluency in a pidgin language." For Carroll the priorities are clear: mastery of formal patterns is a means of achieving the ultimate objective—effective use of the language as a vehicle for communication (*Testing Communicative Performance: An Interim Study*, Pergamon, 1980, p. 7).

as informer or facilitator, analyzing student weaknesses and structuring appropriate practice. In short, since intensive practice on form follows the initial communication situation, this practice can be adapted to the specific needs of the students.

Choosing one sequence over the other depends on the teaching situation itself more than the inherent superiority of one sequence over the other. Some students feel more comfortable in communication activities if they already have a firm grasp of the mechanics of the language. Others prefer to make the effort and ask for help—intensive practice—later, as the need arises. Furthermore, some teachers, and teaching situations, place a higher priority on correctness than others. One teacher will temporarily overlook errors as long as communication takes place; another will rate any communication attempt unacceptable if errors occur. The question of which teaching sequence is best, therefore, must ultimately be answered by each teacher after taking into consideration his/her particular situation and the characteristics of the learners.[4]

REPORTED SPEECH IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Since our task here is to teach communicatively, knowing how the students will use reported speech is vital to the preparation of appropriate activities. The teacher might draw up a tentative inventory of situations in which reported speech is used. A student brainstorming session on the same topic will undoubtedly yield useful insights that can be used to further define the initial list. The inventory will probably reveal, for example, that students inform friends and co-workers of telephone messages, transmit requests and orders, reformulate questions and report on meetings attended, and confront people with statements made previously, to name just a few.

The inventory of situations, of course, constitutes the first step. In order to provide a natural framework for the reported-speech activity, we must look back to the *direct-speech*-communication situation that preceded it. In other words, what is actually being reported when we inform of telephone messages, transmit requests, etc.? The content of communication can be analyzed in terms of the language functions described in *Threshold Level English*. Let us examine briefly hypothetical excerpts of telephone conversations and how they would be transmitted as reported speech. The excerpts have been classified by language functions.

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION EXCERPTS	MESSAGE REPORTED
Factual information	
"I'm going to be late."	"John said he was going to be late."
"Does Peter have my ticket?"	"He wants to know if you have his ticket."
Intellectual attitudes	
"I can't use my car."	"Mary said she couldn't use her car."
"Can John pick me up in his?"	"She asked me if you could pick her up in your car."
Emotional attitudes	
"John doesn't enjoy Peter's parties; do you?"	"I told Mary you didn't enjoy Peter's parties and I asked if she did."
"Does Peter like mine?"	"She asked me if you liked her parties."
Moral attitudes	
"I'm sorry about the tickets."	"John said he was sorry about the tickets."
Requests	
"Ask John to meet me at the theater."	"Mary wants you to meet her at the theater."
Social formulae	
"Tell John I called to say goodbye."	"Ed called to say goodbye."

As we can see, the language we could report on covers a wide range of communicative functions. The implications of this for the design of reported-speech activities seems clear. When defining the communication situations that will give rise to the *direct* speech students will later transmit as *reported* speech, a variety of language functions must be taken into account.

In addition to the content of the communication activity, we must also consider who is involved in the transmission and reception of messages and how each one's participation evolves. Let us consider, for example, the transmission of factual information and requests. In many cases, at least three people will take part: the first speaker, a "messenger," and the recipient of the message. The messenger and the recipient play especially important roles. The messenger because by transmitting the first speaker's message he or she acts as a stand-in for this person. The recipient because he or she receives the message and usually reacts to it in some way: (1) contacting the first speaker personally; (2) using the messenger to relay a new message; or (3) acting on the message received, meeting the friend at the theater, for example. It is important for the teacher to identify the "actors" in each situation and map out the natural sequence of message transmission carefully so that classroom activities will reflect real communication situations as realistically as possible.

4. In effect, we are talking about two different approaches to language teaching. Keith Johnson makes the point that "the kind of difficulties discussed here (with respect to the two approaches) reflect a basic and perhaps unresolvable conflict between teacher and student control." See "Two Approaches to the Teaching of Communication" in *Communicative Syllabus Design and Methodology* (Pergamon, 1982).

COMMUNICATIVE REPORTED-SPEECH EXERCISES

Exercises designed to help students communicate with each other not only take into account student needs and interests, they often draw on student input as an indispensable part of the exercise itself. Moreover, in devising communicative exercises, the teacher will carefully order the various steps in the activity to guarantee maximum student participation at each step.

When designing such activities, teachers will find it helpful to recall the five principles Keith Johnson set out in *Communicative Syllabus Design and Methodology.*[5]

1. Information Transfer
2. Information Gap
3. Task Dependency
4. Correction for Content
5. Jigsaw

Each principle examines an aspect of real communicative situations in terms of practices that can be incorporated into classroom activities. It should be noted that the concept of learner-centered language teaching is present in each of the five principles. Briefly, the principles can be summarized as follows:

1. *Information Transfer.* In real communication people often exchange information about themselves, about others, or any number of topics. At some stage in the classroom activity, therefore, students transfer information to each other. Student A will have information that must be passed to student B and vice versa. The information may be exchanged in either written or oral form.

2. *Information Gap.* In real communication situations we ask questions when we need information; we transmit information when others need it. The communicative exercise, therefore, attempts to recreate the "not-knowing" or "information-gap" characteristic of real-life situations so that students will ask questions not merely because the exercise requires them to, but because they really need to know something. If the information possessed by student A is not already known to student B, an information gap will be created and the purpose of communication will be to "bridge the gap." Activities based on real student interests, attitudes, and other personal data are especially appropriate for communicative activities because a natural "gap" already exists: students rarely know *everything* about their classmates, so an authentic "unexpectedness" is produced with regard to the transfer of information.

3. *Task Dependency.* Real communication usually takes place within a well-defined context involving not one, but several interrelated activities. For example, having purchased tickets for a concert, we call a friend to invite him to attend. Our friend's response depends on his current commitments, feelings about the concert, etc. If the invitation is accepted, we will make plans to meet and agree upon a time and place.

Unlike most grammar-focused exercises, therefore, communicative activities usually progress through a number of phases and frequently subordinate one phase of the activity to another. None of the phases is "gratuitous"; each serves a real purpose. The transfer of information is not an end in itself. On the contrary, students will bridge the information gap because they need certain facts to perform a second task. For example, if the first task of an activity involves calling a telephone operator to obtain the number of the nearest hospital, the second task might require the student to call the hospital and request the services of a doctor. Students must perform task 1 in order to perform task 2. One task is dependent upon the other: task dependency is created. Interlocking the various phases of an activity in this way not only assigns each phase a specific role in the larger activity of which it is a part; it also creates a dynamic, meaningful sequence that reflects the evolution of authentic communication.

4. *Correction for Content.* In real life we can usually check that we have received information correctly. In the case of the hospital example given above we would check the number given by the operator by dialing it. If we get through to the hospital, we know the number was transmitted and received accurately. If we cannot get through, however, we will call back the operator. We check for content. Correction for content, therefore, simply means that students make sure that the information recorded reflects the information transmitted.

5. *Jigsaw.* As can be seen from the description of the four previous principles, students work with each other, transferring information and checking for content. The Jigsaw Principle highlights the fact that in real situations more than one person may assume an active role at any time: communication is not a unidirectional activity.

Let us return to the hospital telephone-operator activity described in the previous paragraphs to see how this simultaneous quality can be transferred to the classroom. If the operator has a list of hospitals, each located in a different part of the city, then he/she must request information from the caller in order to provide the number of the "nearest hospital." The caller, on the other hand, must know what part of the city he/she is in and pass that information on to the operator. Both caller and operator have information the other needs: a jigsaw situation exists because both make simultaneous use of the communication situation to satisfy their respective needs.

5. K. Johnson, *Communicative Syllabus Design and Methodology*, 1982. See the chapter entitled "Five Principles in a 'Communicative' Exercise Type."

ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHING REPORTED SPEECH COMMUNICATIVELY

The activities described below place students, their needs and interests, at the center of the communication situation and enable them to take the initiative. Some activities encourage use of specific communicative functions—asking favors, making requests, etc.—while others are deliberately left open-ended. In all cases, however, the information reported is information students themselves produce within a situation they define in accord with their own interests. For example, in "Leaving a Message," students place a phone call and leave a message. The activity provides the framework for the sequence, but the students decide whom they will call and what message they will leave. As a result, the core of the activity will probably relate to their own reality more closely than any situation prepared by the teacher or the textbook, and communication gaps will be created naturally.

All the activities make provision for transfer of real information, the creation and bridging of an information gap, task dependency, correction for content, and simultaneous activity, even though all five communicative principles may not be present to the same degree in each one. The various combinations of skills so often present in authentic communication have also been taken into account: most of the activities require the use of more than one skill at a time—i.e., reading, writing, listening, speaking—and several call for overt physical response.

The activities also allow a variety of classroom arrangements: pairs, small groups, rows, whole class. A few require advance preparation. See, for example, the model message form in "Leaving a Message" and the skit students create and rehearse in "Arranged Incident."

Each activity has been described according to the same format. That is, specification of skills involved (listening, speaking, etc.), communication objective (e.g., leaving a telephone message), sequence of core activity, and preparation for the activity. The sequence of the core activity provides the teacher with a simple "script" that sets out the entire sequence of student interaction. The preparation-for-activity section offers helpful suggestions for using the core activity: how to group students; what to write on the blackboard; follow-up activities.

Naturally, each teacher should experiment with the activities and modify them to suit his or her own needs. Since in many of the activities no language forms are provided—only communicative situations—the activities can be used with students at various levels. For example, the messages used in "Password" can be as simple as *Ask Peter to stand up* or as complex as *Ask Peter if he would mind standing up and writing his name on the blackboard*. Similarly, in "Messenger I," the student who sends a gift may briefly state the reasons for doing so, *Give this sweater to María; she looks cold*, or more extensively, *Give this sweater to María; she left hers at home today and I think she looks cold*. Since all of the activities call for a high degree of student participation and initiative, they are probably most appropriate for adults or adolescents accustomed to pair and group work. As for the time required for each activity, this will also vary according to student age, class size, and proficiency in group work.

Leaving a Message

Small Groups
Skills: listening, speaking, writing, reading
Objectives: leaving a telephone message; giving someone a telephone message

Sequence of Core Activity

Student A: Call and leave a message for student B.
Student C: Take down the message.
Student A: Have C repeat the gist of the message.
Student C: "You are going to be late. You'll call back later."
Student C: Write down the message and give it to student B.
Student B: Act on the message received.

Preparation for Activity

1. Brainstorm situations in which you make telephone calls (either L_1 or L_2).
   a. Which are the most common for you?
   b. Most common situations are put on the blackboard.
   c. The teacher can control by selecting the situations to be worked with.

2. What do you do if the person you ask to speak to is not there? In small groups, choose a situation and think of what message you would leave. Examples:
   Ask her to call me back.
   Tell her that Harry called.
   Ask her when she is leaving for Paris.
   Please ask her to send me her red pen.

   a. Ideally, at least one part of the message should require an observable physical response on the part of the person receiving it.
   b. Messages can be written on the board and corrected if desired.
   c. Groups can exchange hypothetical messages.
   d. The form of the final message will vary according to the situation:

Example 1: The student taking down the message merely completes a pre-established form:

> _____ *called*
> *Will call back*
> *Please call him/her back at* _____
> *Wants you to* _____
> *Wanted to know if* _____
> *Other:* _____

Example 2: The message could be given in complete sentences transformed from notes:

Mary wants to know if . . . ; Mary wants you to . . . ; Mary wants to know when you are leaving, etc.

3. Following the outline given in Sequence of Core Activity, the students create an original telephone dialogue based on one of the proposed situations.

Password

Large Groups
Skills: listening and speaking
Objective: transmitting and acting on an oral request

Sequence of Core Activity

Student A: Ask the student immediately in front of you to pass a message to the last person in the row, student X.

Student B: Pass A's message to the person in front of you.

Student Y: Pass the message to student X.

Student X: Acknowledge receipt of the message.

Preparation for Activity

1. Divide the class into rows.
2. Call up to the front of the room the last student in each row: they will become the "row leaders."
3. Have the "leaders" decide what message—a command, for example—will be sent, and write it down. The teacher will keep these papers.
4. Send the leaders back to their seats.
5. At a given signal each of the "leaders" will whisper his message to the person in front of him and start the message on its way down the row.
6. The team that gets its message through and acted on first wins.
7. The teacher and other teams can check that the message was accurately transmitted and carried out by consulting the papers written in step 3.

Messenger I

Small Groups
Skills: listening and speaking
Objective: asking a favor, stating reasons, and expressing thanks

Sequence of Core Activity

Student A: Choose something to give to student B. Ask student C to deliver the gift and explain your reasons for giving the gift: "Please give this sweater to Maria; she looks cold."

Student C: Deliver the gift to student B, explaining who sent it and why: "Pedro asked me to give this to you. He said you looked cold."

Student B: Thank the messenger and send a thank-you message back to A: "Tell A I said 'Thank you.' "

Student C: Deliver the second message.

Preparation for Activity

1. The teacher may assign student roles to avoid excessive movement.
2. Students should use their imagination when selecting the gift and stating reasons.

Messenger II

Two Pairs
Skills: listening, speaking, and writing
Objective: transmitting messages orally and in writing

Sequence of Core Activity

Student A: Ask student B, your messenger, to deliver a message to C.

Student B: Transmit A's message orally, whispering, to student C.

Student C: Write an answer to A's message and ask B to deliver it.

Student B: Deliver C's message to A.

Student A: Meet personally with C to make further plans or clarifications.

Student C: Ask student D, your messenger, to deliver a message to A.

Student D: Transmit C's message orally, whispering, to student A.

Student A: Write an answer to C's message and ask D to deliver it.

Student D: Deliver A's message to C.

Student C: Meet personally with A to make further plans or clarifications.

Preparation for Activity

1. Divide the class into groups of four. Have each group subdivide into pairs.
2. Pairs: Each pair will have a sender and a messenger. Each pair decides which student will have each role and informs the other pair of their decision.
3. Give examples of sample messages: "Ask Mario if he can help me with my homework tonight."
4. Explain that since within each group of four there will be two messengers, each delivering a message, whispering is a must.

And What Did She Say after That?

Small Groups
Skills: speaking, listening, and writing
Objective: report a series of events and/or a conversation

Sequence of Core Activity

Student A: Report part of a conversation and ask classmates to take over by asking "And what did s/he say after that?"

Student B: Write down A's narration and report the next extract of the conversation; repeat A's question.

Student C: Write down information received and finish the narration.

Preparation for Activity

1. The teacher selects a comic strip with appropriate dialogue exchanges, numbers each scene in order, and then separates the frames.
2. The teacher divides the class into groups. (Group size: as many students as frames in the comic-strip story.) The

teacher gives each member of the group one numbered scene from the strip.

3. Since each student has only one frame of the strip story, s/he must listen to other group members to get the complete story (jigsaw reading).

4. Once the dialogue exchanges of all the frames have been narrated, the students write up the entire strip in narrative form.

5. The students check the accuracy of the narration with the dialogue of the original frames, OR

6. The students may try to reconstruct the original dialogue exchanges in the comic strip on the basis of their narrations.

Eyewitness

Small Groups or Pairs
Skills: speaking, listening, and writing
Objectives: contrast recollections with reality; express contrasts orally

Sequence of Core Activity

Eyewitnesses: Study a detailed color photograph for 60 seconds.

Interviewers: Prepare a list of questions about the scene and ask them of the eyewitnesses.

Eyewitnesses: Answer from memory as well as you can.

Interviewers: Write down the answers received. When all the questions have been asked, allow the eyewitnesses to look at the picture while you report their answers: "You said the car was blue, but it's black."

Preparation for Activity

1. Provide pictures with a lot of action and detail.

2. Encourage students to elicit a variety of information: size, weight, color, etc.

3. Variant: The eyewitnesses hear the same questions twice—once after seeing the picture for only one minute and again after seeing it a second time. The interviewers compare the eyewitnesses' first reponse with their second response: "When I asked you the first time, you said the car was blue, but the second time you said it was red."

Interviewing

Small Groups
Skills: listening, speaking, and writing
Objective: reporting information about personal preferences

Sequence of Core Activity

Groups A & B: Prepare three or four questions on a given theme: "Do you like the Beatles?" Prepare a grid with the names of each member of group B, and copy the questions under each name.

Group A: Working individually, ask group B members your questions, and try to complete as much of your grid as possible.

Group B: Ask group A members your questions in the same way.

Groups A & B: Compare notes within your group and complete your grid: "What do we know about Juan?" "He told me he doesn't like the Beatles."

Groups A & B: Send the completed grid to the other group for correction

Preparation for Activity

1. Divide the class into groups and pair off the groups.

2. Set a time limit for the interview phase.

3. Each student in each group will work individually. Interviews will, therefore, take place on a one-to-one basis, and several interviews will be taking place at the same time.

4. A student may refuse to answer *one* of the four questions that his/her interviewer asks. However, s/he may not refuse to answer the *same* question more than *once*. This means that no interviewer will be able to gather more than three answers from any given student. As a result, each student will have to interview more than one student, and each student will have contact with more than one interviewer.

5. Group members should tell each other which questions they have not been able to get answered, so that others can pose them to the students in question.

Three-Way Conversations

Small Groups
Skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing
Objective: asking others to get information about a third person

Sequence of Core Activity

Students A & B: Prepare a list of questions to ask C.

Student A: Ask C as many of the questions as you remember; transmit C's answers orally to B as you do so.

Student C: Answer A's questions and keep a record of them.

Student B: Consult your list and prompt A on any unasked questions: "Ask her if she's coming by train."

Students A & B: Write down the information and send it to C for correction.

Preparation for Activity

1. The teacher may rehearse with the whole class first.

2. Specific situations may be suggested: (1) you are making an overseas call to someone who is coming to visit you; (2) you are arranging a blind date for B.

3. Variant: Student C has a partner prompting their list of questions.

4. Variant: Students converse face to face. Each interrupts the conversation once for clarification: "Did you say that you are working in an office?"

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Teaching Literature at the University Level

L. A. KRSUL
Universidad de San Andres, La Paz

LUPITA ANDRADE DE KRSUL has taught in the Department of Linguistics at the Universidad Mayor de San Andres since 1973. She has been the executive director of the Bolivian-American Center in La Paz for three years. Ms. Krsul was business manager of a petroleum services/representation company for five years and is still on its Board. She is an editorial writer for *Ultima Hora*, a La Paz newspaper, and some of her articles on literature have been reprinted in anthologies. Ms. Krsul attended Manhattanville College in Purchase, New York, and Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

At the highest level, literature in the EFL/ESL context (and here I must emphatically reject the "short stories only" approach) must include novel, drama, essay, and poetry, with occasional forays into films and video. It leans heavily on the intricate play of word sense and word sound, with cadence and rhythm being accessories to meaning, and with meanings developing in layers, reinforcing one another. This makes the teaching of literature to nonnative speakers difficult in any language, but particularly in English, where the heavy use of onomatopoeic words, the scarcity of rhymes, and reliance on alliteration/assonance and stress as opposed to syllabic count are in marked contrast to Hispanic word rhythms and usages. This means that the student must progress from normal conversational rhythms and phrases to denser, more complex structures of meaning and sound. This will enrich his comprehension and appreciation of the language, in addition to whatever enjoyment and profit he derives from the literature per se.

Most literature courses in EFL/ESL center on teaching the language rather than on the literary works themselves and their intrinsic value as art; and most are concerned only superficially, if at all, with literary techniques, analysis of structure and meaning, and in-depth appreciation of the body of Anglo-American literature as such. Therefore, over a period of years I have developed my own approach to teaching literature, an approach that has proved rewardingly successful.

My approach is basically structural. It does not condescend to the students, but expects them to comprehend on their own at least 80 percent of the material studied and demands the investment of a great deal of time in research and creativity in solving language problems. Vocabulary is the most obvious of these, and the most easily solved. In fact, the most immediate reward of this exacting approach is the rapid enlargement of the students' vocabulary and comprehension.

While the aims of the curriculum are ambitious, in actual practice the most one can achieve is a modest overview of the literature. This is accompanied, however, by significant achievement of three kinds: the opening of the doors of literature for the students, a marked improvement in their analytical reading and comprehension, and an improvement in their writing skills. The one aspect of EFL/ESL training that this course does not emphasize (although it is not totally neglected) is speaking. The focus of the course is specialized and double-edged, so that while the principal focus is on literary values, language acquisition and improvement receive careful consideration.

Content of the course

This double goal and double focus makes the selection of material crucial and determines the teacher's approach toward the material. The approximate contents

of the program as it now stands are as follows:

LEVEL ONE

1. Chaucer: selections
2. Langland: background, reference
3. Malory and the Arthurian Cycle: selections
4. Ballad Poetry and Tradition: selections
5. Shakespeare: in depth—one play read completely, other selections, reference

LEVEL TWO

1. Alexander Pope: selections
2. William Blake: selections
3. Robert Burns: selections
4. Jane Austen: one novel
5. Wordsworth: selected poems, biographia literaria
6. Coleridge: *Kubla Khan*, *The Ancient Mariner* (selections)
7. Shelley: selections
8. Keats: selections
9. Byron: selections

LEVEL THREE

1. Robert and E. B. Browning: selections
2. Tennyson: selections
3. Swinburne: selections
4. Emily Dickinson: selections
5. Walt Whitman: selections
6. G. B. Shaw: one play (*Pygmalion* or *Saint Joan*)
7. Washington Irving: one work (*Sleepy Hollow* / *Rip van Winkle*)
8. Edgar Allan Poe. at least two stories; selections from poetry
9. Nathaniel Hawthorne: *The Scarlet Letter* and another story
10. Melville: selections

LEVEL FOUR

1. G. M. Hopkins: selections
2. The War and Poets: Owens, etc.
3. W. B. Yeats: selections
4. Archibald MacLeish: selections
5. D. H. Lawrence: selections
6. Ezra Pound: selections
7. T. S. Eliot: selections, one essay
8. Faulkner: one story
9. Hemingway: one story
10. One novel/one play: variable choice
11. Various selections from contemporary poets

At all levels, several authors (major and minor) and works not listed above are freely interspersed with the formal curriculum in order to make points clear, and in accordance with what especially appeals to the particular group of students.

Since Level One, chronologically the first, is by far the most difficult and the densest in terms of language and depth, I insist that insofar as possible students take Levels Three and Four first, and One and Two afterward, although this does present the problem of making an integrated historical, cultural, and literary perspective less accessible to the students. The student would then begin the course with late 19th-century British and American authors.

Unliterary approaches

I have done some research into the teaching of literature in this specialized second-language context, and have found very little written specifically on this subject. Although the EFL library at my disposal is fairly large, the literature offerings are small and occur in a basically non-literary context. In all cases the emphasis is on language acquisition, and the work of art, as such, nearly disappears. In one very clear case, the popular book *20th Century American Short Stories*,[1] featuring well-known authors such as Hemingway, Updike, and Thurber, one of the exercises asks the student to change the sentences from simple past to past perfect—a change that would probably make Hemingway turn over in his grave. Many such cases could be cited.[2]

Basic problems

In contrast, in the courses I am describing, literary works are considered according to their artistic merits, and, as in any survey course, placed in their proper historical and cultural contexts. This creates certain problems that must be faced and solved. These problems merit a closer look.

The basic differences between groups of young Americans (native speakers in relation to the literature studied) and young Bolivian (or other Latin American) students, can be listed in four main categories, three of which are cultural and one mechanical. These differences are religious, sociocultural, historic, and (in terms of sheer language) rhythmic. Each of these presents a distinct problem in understanding Anglo-American works, and each requires a specific solution.

Religious Problems. The different educational approach in primarily Protestant and primarily Catholic cultural milieus is most graphically evident in the students' Biblical knowledge (or lack of it); other important differences are found in their outlook with regard to the concepts of sin, guilt, and salvation.

1. J. A. McConochie, *20th Century American Short Stories* (New York: Collier Macmillan, 1975), p. 38.

2. A similar case—in this instance, poetry—is the book *Wheel Turning* by Dean Curry. On page 24, in the poem "Bells Ringing," he uses the word "tintinnabulation," which is explained on page 25 in a small glossary, as "the ringing of bells." Although there are four questions for discussion, nowhere does Edgar Allan Poe get credit for the word, nor is there a reference to him or his works. This is a very unliterary approach, admissible only if the sole emphasis is on language acquisition (where *tintinnabulation* is only one more synonym for the ringing of bells) free of the overtones and cultural and emotional enrichment that reference to Poe's great poem would bring. In another book of poems for "English as a Foreign Language," edited by Anna Maria Malkoç and entitled *On Wings of Verse*, which with good taste and judgment attempts to bring well-known poems and writers to the EFL student, the compiler states in the introduction that her aim is "to provide supplementary practice in oral skills: pronunciation, stress and intonation, and general language development. It is *not* intended as a resource for English literature teachers. . . . These poems may be introduced into the classroom much in the same way that songs and language-teaching games are used: to reinforce and expand the language skills and to enrich the students' cultural understanding."

Young Catholic students generally have a fair knowledge of the New Testament (Apocalypse and Acts of the Apostles excluded), but the lack of a home-and-church Bible-reading tradition makes common Biblical references abstruse and in need of clarification. For example, the line "Through the sad heart of Ruth, when sick for home,/She stood in tears amid the alien corn"[3] needs a longish explanation and is a good subject for discussion, since Judaic laws and traditions also come into the picture.

To students with a typically American background, the Puritan ethic, even if not shared, is immediately comprehensible. The concepts of predestination, guilt, and the nature of sin, with the Calvinistic overtones implicit in, for example, Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* or *Young Goodman Brown*, require clarification for Roman Catholic students, to whom guilt is temporary and sin erasable by repentance and absolution. Thus a passage such as this in *The Scarlet Letter:*

> It may be that when we forgot our God—when we violated our reverence each for the other's soul—it was thenceforth vain to hope we could meet hereafter, in an everlasting and pure reunion.

almost inevitably elicits the question "Why not, if they were sorry for what they had done?" Hawthorne, Melville, and their guilt-ridden world fascinate the students, but each reading turns into a heated discussion of religion, ethics, and customs (prayer meetings and not Mass, ministers and not priests, immanent virtue and not sacramental grace, etc.). As a result, I have reluctantly and regretfully come to exclude such a magnificent author as Milton (except for the sonnet on his blindness, and occasional excerpts from *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, or *Lycidas*), because his intensely Puritan background, classical learning, and incredibly dense diction mean more explanations, translations, and interlineations than are possible in the time allotted.

Sociocultural Problems. The society to which the teacher must refer when comparing or contrasting is a society that has no experiential concept of an aristocracy of blood and birth. This, for example, makes it extremely difficult to foster true interest in works such as *Lady Windermere's Fan*—not to mention the very different moral codes involved, from a temporal as well as spiritual point of view. In these cases a frame of reference must be created out of situations and concepts familiar to the student.

Similarly, though racially we experience myriad shadings of brown, and though the students have a very real concept of the power of money, nevertheless in reading American writers such as Faulkner, concerned with the problems of North and South or American racism, the various connotations of black, mulatto, quadroon, octoroon, "high yaller," nigger, and "poor white" must be sociologically explained before they can be appreciated literarily.

The students are aware—or think they are aware—of the political and sociological connotations of racism and class distinction. Yet in these areas their ideas are generally grossly distorted by political propaganda, and therefore the true importance of denotation, connotation, implication, and "nuance" can easily be lost. In spite of great activism, most of the students are politically naïve and must be dissuaded from applying simplistic concepts to complex problems in works by authors such as Steinbeck.

Last, but not least, the great differences between affluent societies such as North America and those that live on the edge of deprivation, such as our own, make certain aspects of the literature of these societies either incomprehensible or shocking.

Historical Problems. The very different historical backgrounds of Anglo-American and Latin American students create important obstacles to comprehension. This difference is evident even in the focus of their respective educational systems, and is fundamental in their approach to learning.

Most students in Latin America have been trained in the old-fashioned rote-memorization system, where comprehension and analysis are reduced to a minimum, and where the teacher expects and receives word-for-word return of lectures, or, as they are called, *dictados*. The students are proficient and copious note takers, but unfortunately, where a second language is involved, these notes tend to be grossly erroneous, especially when the teacher is talking about complicated situations or ideas. Students are notoriously reluctant to enter into class discussions, especially at the beginning of the term, although by the end of the course they have usually broken the barriers and entered enthusiastically into long arguments.

These problems exist not only in methods of learning but also in the background and matter of such learning. Students here tend to be highly proficient in technical subjects such as chemistry, physics, and math, but the level of their education with respect to literature, history, and general culture is dismally low. They have only the most minimal notions of classical mythology and philosophy, and usually have read very little, if at all, of the classics (even the Spanish classics), having laboriously prepared *resúmenes*, or very condensed summaries copied from summaries copied from other summaries, and having only a distant relationship with the works themselves. Their main concern, inherited from their high-school teachers, has always been with dates and facts, and not at all with style, meaning, or structure.

Neither have these students had much experience

3. Keats, "Ode to a Nightingale."

with researching and writing term papers of an original or analytical nature. Therefore, their tendency, no matter what is asked of them, is to give biographical information and summaries of plots, even if the subject under discussion is structure, style, or language. This tendency must be overcome with each group of students by clear and lengthy descriptions of what is required in papers and essay questions in examinations.

Mechanical Problems. One final difficulty in teaching literature in a second language is purely mechanical: it has to do with rhythms of speech. Even when students have acquired reasonable proficiency in speaking, listening, and writing, they generally do not have the natural cadences in speech that are necessary to appreciate and properly read literary works. This problem becomes acute in the reading of poetry (especially in the first three semesters, where poetic diction is of primary importance), and it can be graphically demonstrated by the following example of scansion of a moderately difficult sonnet. The first line shows the English-language scansion of the iambic pentameter structure, and the second line shows the scansion typically made by Spanish-speaking students. (This presumes they have no serious vices of pronunciation, and adequate speaking skill.)

At thé round eárth's imágined córners, blów
Át thé róund eárth's ímágínéd córnérs, blów

Your trúmpets, ángels; ánd aríse, aríse
Yóur trúmpéts, ángéls; ánd áríse, áríse

From déath, you númberléss inffnitíes
Fróm déath, yóu númbérléss ínffnítíes

Of sóuls, and tó your scáttered bódies gó;
Óf sóuls, ánd tó yóur scáttéréd bódíes gó;[4]

As becomes immediately evident, the Hispanic student, who has carefully learned to pronounce each word separately and slowly, especially with the old-fashioned grammar-translation method predominantly used, stresses each word and syllable individually, making it all but impossible to obtain a natural and appreciative reading.

The concepts *iamb, dactyl, anapest,* etc., or simple cadenced writing, are nearly impossible to communicate, since on their own students are not able to find the rhythms of the language. What little training they have had has involved syllabic counts, and the stresses of English speech are *terra incognita* for them.

Meeting the challenge

Although the aforementioned problems seem formidable, once obstacles are faced and conquered and problems solved (most of the time by eclectic means), the rewards are great. Once the barrier of translation is cleared (and this means intercultural translation more than anything else), the students show a real appreciation of literature, both in prose and poetry. From a strictly practical point of view, it has proved to be more useful to concentrate during class time on poetry and drama, and to leave the short story and novel for outside independent, though obligatory, reading. Class time is short, and much time is lost in digressions that are extraneous to the matter at hand, so that extensive reading in the classroom becomes impracticable. However, the condensed nature of poetry, and the exacting characteristics of its structure, make this genre an ideal vehicle for the illustration of literary forms and techniques. Poetry, although initially more forbidding, has a deeper impact on the students and remains longer with them. Also, once the initial concepts of structure, style, meaning, and language are assimilated, it is easier to apply similar analytical methods, by extension, to prose works.

I have found that since the actual reading experience of these students has been small, and that most of the time it is impossible to find a work that has been read by the whole group, it can be useful to refer to films and TV serials in order to illustrate points such as dramatic conflict, character development, climax, turning point, dénouement, and so on. Films such as *Superman, ET,* or *Star Wars,* which have been seen by almost all, illustrate concepts such as *camp* and *pathos* with relative ease. TV serials make marvelous examples of triteness, bathos, hackneyed situations, emotional clichés, and other things that should be avoided and are negative in great literature; and such illustrations are often much more vivid than any that one could produce by reference to second-rate literary works.

An abundance of illustrations, including maps, diagrams, blackboard drawings, slides, photographs, and other materials are used to make points clear, and to make the classes more dynamic. Since this is not their native language, and the students are uncomfortable expressing unfamiliar concepts, it is vital that classes be interesting enough to motivate them to break the language barrier and enter into discussion.

Several things have proved to be surprises—at least for me. The first is the great impact that the Romantic poets make on today's students. Keats (so young and doomed), Shelley (so very revolutionary), Byron (so brave, so beautiful), and Coleridge (that symbolic albatross) bridge the gap of more than a century with ease and effect.

Twentieth-century writers such as Yeats, Owens, cummings, MacLeish, etc., also have immediate and lasting impact on the students. (The poem "Dulce et Decorum Est" never fails to produce shivers and exclamations.) T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound—once they have

4. John Donne, "Holy Sonnets."

been "explained" a bit—also make a permanent impression. Hemingway is a perennial favorite, with his novels of death and bravery; but Steinbeck, Tennessee Williams, Carson McCullers, Fitzgerald, and Wilder, to name only a few, present serious problems in relating to the students' lives and experiences. Faulkner, although very difficult in some cases, is always a rewarding author to teach. In authors from a different time, Austen is always a pleasure to students and teacher, but Scott is much more difficult to assimilate.

So it is with many other authors and works, and these have determined, a bit by pre-selection, a bit by trial and error, the choice of works and authors to be read and studied, always keeping in mind that the best authors must not be neglected just because they are difficult. However, it is better to learn a few things well than many poorly, and so, if the class is particularly stimulated by one author or one work, lingering to do in-depth analyses is acceptable.

When I teach Shakespeare, I always have the group read a whole play, together and in class. *Othello, Macbeth, Hamlet, Julius Caesar, The Tempest, A Midsummer Night's Dream,* etc., all make marvelous reading and wonderful classes. *Lear, Romeo and Juliet* (surprisingly enough), and the historical plays do not come across as well, the first two because they lean heavily on word sound and word play (one too dense, the other too lyrical), and the historical plays for lack of a proper frame of reference. This problem applies to some of the comedies, such as *Measure for Measure, The Merry Wives of Windsor,* and *All's Well that Ends Well,* where the language is sociologically somewhat distant. Humor is always difficult to translate culturally, and more so if it is centuries old. Some comedies such as *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Taming of the Shrew,* which always bring forth feminist discussions, eliciting passionate anti-racist and anti-anti-Semitic reactions, work wonderfully with the students.

The obstacles of vocabulary and sociolinguistic differences disappear within the ample humanness of the playwright, and so not only is one play read completely in class, but excerpts from most of the others are read and analyzed as well, and with success. The students bravely wade through archaic expressions and find true and enduring values in the art of the Bard of Avon. It is far and away the most difficult part of the course, but in the end, if the students have been brought to a proper level of understanding (of language and literature), the best.

In the end, good literature together with an imaginative approach to teaching pays off, since the students who survive the course (which, being very exacting, has a fairly high initial mortality rate) almost invariably finish the series with enthusiasm and a real appreciation of good writing, and, as a bonus, a sharp increase in their reading and writing skills.

Further recommendations

I have thought it wise to point out techniques that work well, and that give positive results, and draw whatever conclusions and lessons we may from them. From this same experience have come the following recommendations.

1. The order of the courses should be changed so that the present Anglo-American Literature Levels Three and Four (19th- and 20th-Century writers) be given before Levels One and Two (earlier works). In no case, unless students have had previous training outside the university in the United States or England, will their level of English be adequate to understand Shakespeare at the beginning of the series (much less Chaucer or Malory!), and since Shakespeare is the greatest exponent of the English language, it is well to study his plays at the end when student comprehension and vocabulary are at their highest level.

2. During language training certain basic literary concepts and materials, like short stories, short poems, and essays should be introduced gradually as supplementary material, especially in courses that teach composition skills. This would free a great deal of the literature-class time now devoted to teaching composition, term-paper writing, grammar, and phonetics as digressions, and make this a series truly dedicated to great literature at an internationally acceptable level.

3. Within the framework of the university, at a time such as this, when learning a second language may be attacked as "alienating" and "pro-imperialistic," it is well to reexamine the aims, goals, and achievements of the English Department, and to restructure them on the soundest possible basis. I am convinced that learning is never negative or alienating: a new language is a tool for expression and communication—and if it is acquired thoroughly and well, it can be a powerful tool. English has become the world's interlanguage, and turning our backs on the mainstream of history will only place us further and further away from our goals as a nation. The quasi-inevitable filtering to our society, through mass media, of superficial fashions and fads, is more dangerous when it is not understood, and when it is placed, through ignorance, out of context. The acquisition of a new language, and with it a clear view of the best (and literature should show the best) that another culture possesses, enables the student to judge and appreciate, with a mature and clear eye, what is good, enduring, and valuable in his own culture and nation.

In reality, the learning of another and internationally useful tongue is a positive achievement for the university, the students, and the foreign-language department. Nevertheless, the quality of the courses offered must be such that the students truly acquire the level of knowledge, proficiency, and mature command of a second language demanded by the overall investment of time, financial resources, and effort. ■

Teaching Translation in the Advanced EFL Class

MARGHERITA ULRYCH
Padova University

MARGHERITA ULRYCH is a language assistant in the English Department of Padova University, Italy, where she teaches courses in translation and varieties of English to fourth-year students. Her main interests are translation, applied lexical semantics, and vocabulary acquisition. She is also an examiner for the University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate.

After being open to a great deal of criticism under the influence of behavioristic learning theories, translation is gradually reestablishing itself as a useful and legitimate didactic tool in foreign-language learning (Muskat-Tabakowska 1973). However, as Wilga Rivers has pointed out, "much of the discussion of the place of translation in language teaching has been at cross-purposes since the kind of translation and its function in the language learning process have not been specified" (Rivers and Temperley 1978:325). A distinction should, moreover, be made between the role of translation in language learning and teaching translation as a skill in its own right. The purpose of this article is to stress the importance of translation both as an effective pedagogic device for advanced EFL students and as a specialized skill.

Designing a translation course

Translation is an integral part of the written examination in most foreign-language departments of Italian universities. At the University of Padova, translation from Italian into English is a two-year course taken in the third and fourth years of a four-year modern language degree course, i.e., once students have achieved a moderately high standard in the four monolingual skills.[1] When I took over the fourth-year translation class, I compiled a questionnaire to evaluate students' attitudes towards translation and its place in the university curriculum. The results were overwhelmingly in favor of a translation course that covered a wide range of styles and registers,[2] and the majority of students envisaged translation playing a significant role in their prospective careers. In other words, they were aware of the importance of translation as a professional skill, and they felt it should be an integral part of their modern-language syllabus. This confirmed my belief that students should be given the opportunity to engage in translation as an activity in its own right at an advanced level and that it is an appropriate didactic tool in the advanced EFL classroom.

The two-year translation course was therefore designed to focus on grammatical structures in the first year and varieties of English in the second. My targets for the second year were the following: (1) to teach translation as a skill so that students would acquire the ability to translate semantically, syntactically, and stylistically complex texts from various discourse areas

1. Although beginners are accepted, most of the students have some years of school English behind them. Language teaching in the first year is adapted to the students' needs to bring them all up to the same standard by the end of the year.

2. In the present paper *style* is used according to Martin Joos' degrees of formality: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, intimate (Martin Joos, *The Five Clocks* [Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961], p. 11). *Register* is used in its restricted sense according to the subject matter involved in a discourse (Randolph Quirk and Sidney Greenbaum, *A University Grammar of English* [Longman, 1973], p. 6).

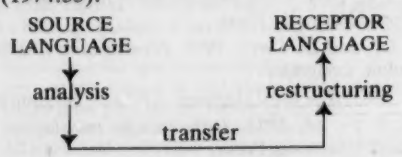
with a high degree of communicative equivalence, and (2) to enhance students' awareness of the different stylistic and registral variations of both the source language (SL) and target language (TL). Special emphasis was placed throughout the course on judicious selection of lexical items in order to bring students to the realization that although words share the same semantic field, they can have different syntactic, semantic, and stylistic restrictions.[3]

Types of translation

The theoretical basis for such an approach is aptly expressed by George Steiner (1975:47): "inside or between languages, human communication equals translation." Roman Jakobson (1966:233) distinguishes three ways of interpreting a verbal sign: it may be translated into other signs of the same language (intralingual translation), into another language (interlingual translation), or into another, non-verbal system of symbols (intersemiotic translation). The first and second types of translation, namely intralingual and interlingual, are what concern us here.

Intralinguistically we translate all the time, using a vast range and variety of language. We automatically interpret an utterance according to the communicative function it expresses: an apparently informative message may in reality be a piece of advice, an injunction, a prohibition. To understand what is actually being communicated is to translate. Language also varies according to social function: we use different styles and registers to say the same thing, depending on the role we are assuming in a particular discourse. Again, we make a sort of "hermeneutic translation," i.e., we interpret the message being transmitted. Whenever we encounter an expression in any way "foreign" to us, whether in a written or a spoken medium, we find ourselves more or less consciously interpreting the less familiar by putting the more familiar in its place. Then, at the appropriate moment, we use the once "foreign" utterance "like a native." In each of these processes we engage in intralingual translation.

Translation along these lines is undoubtedly a valuable pursuit, as it forces students to explore the resources of their own language and to develop source-language analyzing techniques—a fundamental stage in the interlingual translation process. Eugene Nida's model of the translation process illustrates the stages involved (1974:33):



3. A parallel oral course was set up to further develop students' skills in recognizing and actively using varieties of English.

To give a simple example, the Italian word *ciao* is used as a form of greeting equally on arrival and departure. Thus, in translating *ciao* into English, students must first analyze the source-language text to establish whether the context is one of coming or one of going. The notion of greeting is then transferred into the target language and restructured as *hello* or *goodbye*.

Exploring register, function, and style

Translation thus involves the exploration of the potential of two languages. The ability to synchronize the source language and target language requires as a precondition a comprehensive syntactic, lexical, morphological, and stylistic knowledge of both L_1 and L_2; translation is a means to both explore and develop such knowledge. Throughout the translation course, therefore, students are given guidance in interpreting the source-language material correctly. Before attempting to reproduce the Italian text in the target language, they are asked to consider its function (Newmark 1981), register, and style and to make the appropriate syntactic and lexical adjustments. In English, for instance, a formal scientific text with a purely informative function calls for frequent use of passives and nominal groups, and the lexical choice is dictated by the specific scientific register, whereas in an informal piece of popular literature with a persuasive function, collocation and connotation greatly influence the selection of the correct lexical item.

Scope is thus given to practicing both intralingual and interlingual translation. An individual and comparative analysis of the source-language and target-language texts will, indeed, show, as Widdowson (1979:109) points out, that there may be "more in common between certain 'varieties' in different languages than between different 'varieties' within the same language." Interlingual translation of scientific register, for example, is likely to present far fewer problems than intralingual translation into a different kind of discourse within the same language (simplification for the layman, for instance). However, the first step is always to identify the register in the source-language text: the Italian *voto* will be translated as *vow* in religious register, as *vote* in political register, and *mark* (American *score* or *grade*) when referring to academic performance. Again, when the Italian text contains the word *accusare*, students must decide whether it simply means *accuse* or whether it is used in a more strictly legal register and should, therefore, be translated as *charge;* in medical register the equivalent would be *to feel,* as in *accusare un dolore = to feel a pain.* Strictly bound to the problem of register is, of course, that of collocation. The Italian verb *dichiarare* may be translated into English in a number of ways; e.g., *lo dichiarò suo erede = he made him his heir; vi dichiaro marito e moglie = I pronounce you*

man and wife; nulla da dichiarare = nothing to declare (McKay 1980).

Semantic refinements

This type of exercise will lead to interesting and fruitful discussion on the semantic features of English words which may, at first sight, seem similar in meaning. *Beam, flash, gleam, glisten, glow, sparkle, shimmer, shine,* for example, all share the semantic feature "sending out or reflecting light," but a distinction may be made between continuous light and intermittent light, cold light and warm light, dull light and intense light. Moreover, they are subject to constraints of collocation: in translating *I suoi occhi brillarono,* students must decide from the linguistic and situational context whether *his/her eyes glistened with tears, flashed with indignation,* or *sparkled with joy.*

Apparently equivalent words in two languages, or in the same language, may also differ stylistically: one word may be used in informal situations whereas its interlingual or intralingual synonym may be acceptable only in a formal context. *I really enjoyed the film* is closer to *mi è veramente piaciuto il film* than *I was most entertained by the film,* but to decide whether *arricchirsi* should be translated as *to get rich* or *to acquire wealth* calls for a stylistic evaluation of the whole source-language text. The range of possible equivalents for *rubare* is even greater, as may be seen from the following stylistic scale showing degrees of formality:

Slang			**Colloquial**	**Informal**	**Formal**
rip off	snitch	swipe	lift pinch	steal	steal pilfer

Here again, students are encouraged to pool their ideas and to offer suggestions as to the most suitable equivalent. As their interest in words is aroused, students develop their potential for acquiring new vocabulary and improving their knowledge of both L_1 and L_2. "Vocabulary cannot be taught. It can be presented, explained, included in all kinds of activities, but it must be learned by the individual" (Rivers 1981:463). Translation is one such activity.

In view of the importance of lexical choice in both language acquisition (Richards 1976) and translation, students should be trained to make more discriminating and effective use of bilingual and monolingual dictionaries. The need to check the meaning and features of lexical items in the monolingual dictionary should be stressed so as to avoid, as far as the dictionary itself allows,[4] students' producing translations such as the following: in attempting to find an English equivalent for *stringendo il collo della dama* (referring to a scarf), students offered such versions as *clasping, gripping, clutching, squeezing,* or even *wringing the lady's neck.*

In some cases an expression may be linked to source-language behavioral patterns, as, for example, the Italian *Buon appetito,* and students will have to contend with the problem of the nonexistence of a similar convention in the target-language culture. Exact translation is impossible since *Good appetite* used alone is meaningless, and there is no English phrase that fulfills the same function. Thus, "some sort of modification of a native-language concept to fit a foreign-language equivalent will have to be made" (Krakowian 1984). Certain expressions that may be applicable pose a problem of style. Students would therefore have to interpret the source-language text to select the most appropriate expression—the colloquial *Dig in* or *Tuck in,* the more formal *Do start,* or the ritualistically apologetic *I hope you like it* or *I hope it's all right* (McGuire 1980).

A specialized skill

Translation conceived of as intra- and interlingual interpretation leads to a deeper awareness of the complexity of language and enhances students' ability to develop source-language analyzing techniques and source-language/target-language transfer strategies. Unless students are able to interpret the source-language message to be transmitted accurately, they will be unable to produce effective interlingual communication. However, competence in a language "does not in itself indicate significant ability in translating to and from that language" (Nida 1976:66). Interlingual translation may thus be considered a sort of supercompetence marked off from the four monolingual skills. It is a demanding skill requiring specialized training and guidance. "It is not only through the place assigned to it in the foreign-language course that translation is relevant to language teaching. As well as being a means to the learning of a foreign language it may also be the end towards which this study is directed" (Halliday et al. 1964:129).

4. *Applied Linguistics*, vol. II, no. 3, Autumn 1981, is entirely devoted to the issue of lexicography and its pedagogic applications.

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Teaching Reported Speech

continued from page 8

Arranged Incident[6]

Small Groups
Skills: observing, listening, speaking, and writing
Objective: reporting an event in detail

Sequence of Core Activity

Group A: Prepare a script.
Actor: Present an incident, following group A's script.
Class: Observe the incident.
Teacher: Tell the class to write down what happened.
Class: Working individually and silently, jot down the facts about the incident, reporting dialogue as well.
Teacher: Call time and divide the class into pairs.
Pairs: Compare notes and make a list of points of disagreement.
Teacher: Form groups of four if time permits.
Groups: Write points of disagreement on the board.
Actor: Perform the script again or hand out copies of the script.
Groups: Study the script to correct/complete notes.
Teacher: Allow time for discussion of different views.

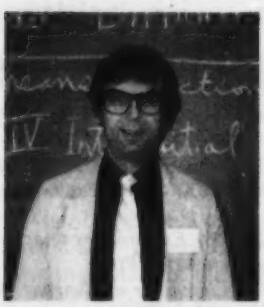
Preparation of Activity

1. Student(s) prepare the script in advance, and learn it by heart.
2. Gather props and appropriate clothing essential to making the incident truly memorable.
3. For a single class session, scripts involving only one or two actors are best.
4. Variant: After the writing sessions, a "detective" asks questions about the incident. The class indicates answers by raising their hands. Multiple-choice or true-false answers can be tabulated on the blackboard and verified as above. ■

6. Arranged Incident is a modification of a writing activity described by Robert and Elizabeth Hawley in *Writing for the Fun of It*, ERA Press, Amherst, Mass., 1974. A sample skit might involve two people: the teacher and a student. The student bursts into the classroom suddenly with a buzzing calculator in her hand and goes up to the teacher to ask for help:
Student: Please show me how to turn this thing off!
Teacher: (*very angry*) Give it to me! Here. Look! (*turning off the buzzer*) Just push the red button to the right.
Student: Sorry for interrupting your class. Thanks.
Teacher: All right. (*still angry*) But please leave and let me finish the lesson!

Listen and Act: From Simple Actions to Classroom Drama

DALE T. GRIFFEE
James English School, Sendai



DALE T. GRIFFEE lives in Sendai, Japan, where he has been teaching EFL for 10 years. He is active in the Japan Association of Language Teachers and is president of the Sendai chapter. Mr. Griffee's most recent text is *Hear Say*, coauthored with David Hough (Addison Wesley, 1986). He is currently working on an intermediate conversation text.

How do we learn language? How can we teach language? How does action assist both learning and teaching? These are intriguing questions. But I would rephrase the first question, changing *learn* to *acquire:* How do we acquire language? The word *learn* is closely associated with the activity of the rational analytical mode of the brain, e.g., sequential, verbal, logical one-thing-at-a-time thinking (Markley 1982). I would prefer to use the word *acquire,* which is associated with the activity of the visionary, intuitive mode of the brain, e.g., spatial, visual, and sensory perception. We *learn* rules, vocabulary, and patterns. Learning is conscious. But the knowledge of a language that enables us to speak is subconscious. It is acquired, not learned (Krashen 1982).

Research over the last several years points increasingly to listening as the key activity in acquiring language (Winitz 1981). Drills and rote memory can produce a situation in which the students are speaking but not understanding what they are saying. Brown, in a summary of issues in first-language acquisition, states:

> Too many language classes are filled with rote practice that centers on surface forms. If Ausubel is correct in his theory of learning, the frequency of stimuli and the number of times spent practicing a form are not highly important in learning an item. What is important is meaningfulness. Contextualized, appropriate, meaningful communication in the second language seems to be the best possible practice the second-language learner could engage in. (Brown 1980:61)

In other words, we learn (in the sense of acquire) by acting in a meaningful context in which the language input is understandable. Let me give two examples of a meaningful context provided by real life in which language was acquired.

1. A 10-year-old boy was sitting on the third-base-line bleachers in a baseball park near his home. It was a small ballpark, and he had been there many times. Behind the third-base bleachers was a building at which were sold soft drinks, candy bars, and hamburgers. It was the only building behind the third-base bleachers. The public-address system announced that the concession stand was open and was now selling soft drinks, candy bars, and hamburgers. The boy had never before heard the word "concession." He decided it must refer to the building behind him and its activity.

2. A teacher was leaving his school building with several students after his class. It was a very dark night, as it had been raining. Instead of walking to the corner and crossing with the light, the teacher and several students ran across the street. One of the young woman students cried out "Abunai!"[1] Several years have passed, but the

Thanks are due to Steve Brown for helpful comments on an earlier draft and to Charles Wordell for his comments and guidance from start to finish.

1. *Abunai* is usually translated as "dangerous." In this case an English native speaker might have said, "Be careful" or "Watch out."

teacher still remembers the word, the woman student, the darkness of the night, the cool feeling after the rain.

Do these two stories tend to prove that all vocabulary can be learned by means of meaningful context? In the case of a speaker's native language (L_1), I think it does. Diller devised a test to determine an adult native speaker's vocabulary, and he concluded that by the time we are seven years old our recognition vocabulary is more than 50,000 words. Especially remarkable, Diller noted, was that junior-high-school students increased their vocabulary by an average of 75 words per day with no special effort (Diller 1978:128–31). All native speakers of any language know thousands of words that they don't remember how, when, or where they learned. Occasionally they used a dictionary—but very occasionally. These thousands of words were learned in context—sometimes by guessing and sometimes through explicit instructions, e.g., a lecture.

What are the implications for learning a language in a classroom? While it may not be possible to learn all vocabulary items in context, it does seem that the more a teacher can create a meaningful context, the more language will be acquired, simply because we acquire language when a context is created in which we hear and understand.

But what is it we understand? Do we understand rules? Words? Structures? No. What we understand is the meaning. The reason a context is necessary for acquisition is because it is the context that gives us both linguistic help (*abunai, concession*) and extralinguistic help (the dark night, the building behind the third-base bleachers), which cement and hold the meaning.

This is the role of action in language acquisition and language teaching. Using action is one way for a teacher to create a meaningful context in which students can promote the subconscious acquisition of L_2. Action forces students to focus on meaning rather than rules and their use.

From a pedagogical point of view, there are several contributions actions can make:

1. The students make few if any mistakes.
2. Actions focus the attention of the students where it belongs—not on sounds, stress, cadence, or grammar, but on meaning.
3. Often students who can read, write, and even speak English are unable to understand normal spoken English. Listening and acting corrects this situation (Palmer and Palmer 1925).[2]
4. Actions give the teacher something to talk about and provide subject matter that the entire class can observe.
5. Actions help language comprehension. If the teacher picks up a blue car while saying "Pick up the blue car," the meaning is clear.
6. Action provides feedback. The teacher does not have to ask whether the student understands, but can see this.
7. Action aids memory. If you drive a car to a certain place once, you can usually find the place again. This is because your muscles and eyes remind the brain where you turned left and where you did not.
8. Finally, actions that would not be interesting if stated in your native language (e.g., "Go to the person standing by the door and take her to the board") become interesting when stated in a foreign language and understood by the student. And, as Asher has noted, almost any school program can produce fluency if the students stay in the program long enough (Asher 1977:2); the trick is keeping the students interested enough to stay.

2. The first three of these insights comes from Palmer and Palmer (1925), whose contribution to learning through action is too generally ignored. This is unfortunate, because their book was the first to treat the subject in a comprehensive manner from a pedagogical point of view—helpful to a classroom teacher—and it is still useful today.

Active listening

Having presented a case for using listening combined with actions, let us examine the technique.

Suppose you are teaching low-level students who could be classified as low or false beginners. In other words, your students have studied grammar, they seem to know many words, including some rather difficult low-frequency words, and they know some set phrases. But they speak haltingly or not at all. This would be a good class to begin with.

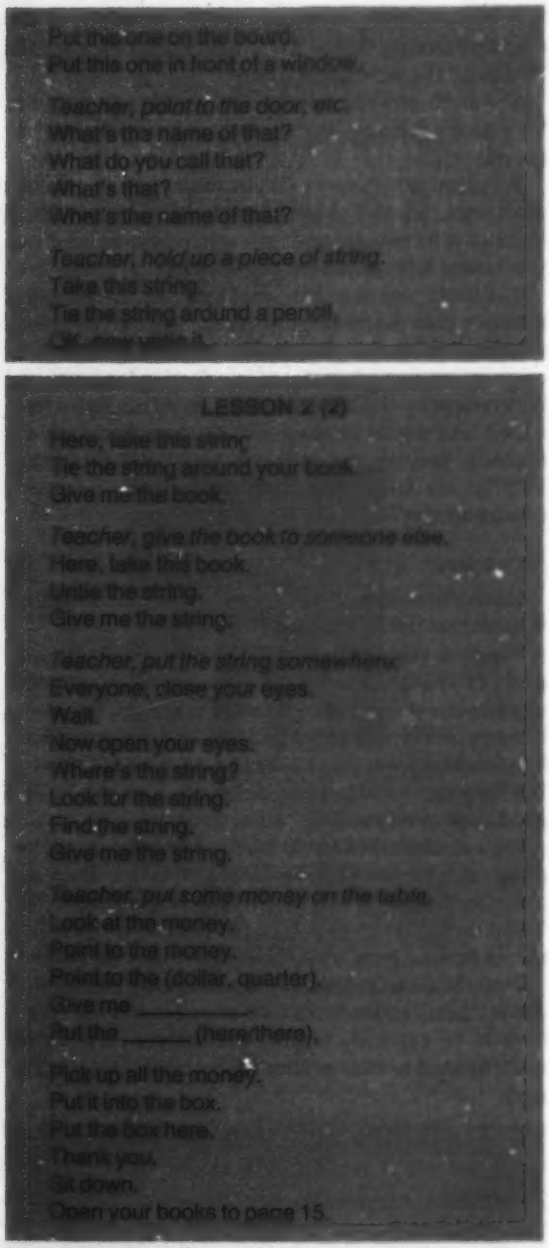
On a card that is easy to hold, write some simple actions, such as *stand up, walk,* and *sit down.* Then add some locations. Your commands might sound like "Walk to the table; pick up a pencil; give the pencil to me; sit down." Now try combining some of the phrases. "Go to the table and pick up the red pencil and then sit down." Small connectives such as *and* or *and then* don't have to be explicitly taught. The sample cards below could be used to elicit actions from a class of false beginners.

LESSON 2 (1)

Teacher, first put several objects, e.g., pencils, on the table.
Point to that one.
Now point to that one.
Now point to that (blue) one.

Give me that one.
Now give me that one.
Now give me that one.

Put this one on a chair.
Put this one in front of the door.
Put this one near a window.


Put this one on the board.
Put this one in front of a window.

Teacher, point to the door, etc.
What's the name of that?
What do you call that?
What's that?
What's the name of that?

Teacher, hold up a piece of string.
Take this string.
Tie the string around a pencil.
OK, now untie it.

LESSON 2 (2)

Here, take this string.
Tie the string around your book.
Give me the book.

Teacher, give the book to someone else.
Here, take this book.
Untie the string.
Give me the string.

Teacher, put the string somewhere.
Everyone, close your eyes.
Wait.
Now open your eyes.
Where's the string?
Look for the string.
Find the string.
Give me the string.

Teacher, put some money on the table.
Look at the money.
Point to the money.
Point to the (dollar, quarter).
Give me _____.
Put the _____ (here/there).

Pick up all the money.
Put it into the box.
Put the box here.
Thank you.
Sit down.
Open your books to page 15.

The procedure for using the cards is rather simple. After making the cards, assemble the necessary props. (Here you need pencils, a chair, string, a book, money, and a box.) In class, display the props on a table where they will be visible to all students. Then, reading verbatim from the cards, perform several—never more than three—of the actions commanded. On the sample cards, sequences are separated by instructions to the teacher in italics. After you have repeated the sequence you wish to introduce, ask a student, or maybe a group of three students, to perform with you as you read the commands, and go through the actions again. The other students generally absorb the language material, and you can ask any member of the group to perform the sequence, usually without your assistance. This phenomenon, in fact, is what makes seemingly passive learning possible—the students who watch imagine themselves acting out the same sequence, as they may well be called up to do. Those students who perform the task have the double reinforcement of observation followed by performance.

Now you might want to incorporate a classroom task that is real in the sense that it actually needs to be done—for instance, erasing the board. A good rule to follow is that the teacher should never do anything in the classroom that a student can do. The teacher should make every such task a listen-and-act exercise. You could write on your card this series of commands, for instance: "Go to the board. Pick up an eraser and erase the board. Thank you. Now put the eraser on the tray and sit down, please." As before, the teacher should perform all these commands while saying them. Then the teacher can ask a student to perform the commands while the teacher and the student do them together. Finally, the teacher can read the commands, and another student should be able to perform them. If the student has any problem, the teacher should not hesitate to demonstrate again.

Later you can condense this to something like "Erase the board, please" or "Yumi, would you erase the board?" In the latter case the polite expression *would you* will be acquired unconsciously in the same way as the connectives were acquired—which is a very natural way to learn a language. Now you have several cards ready for class. For reference, let's call these "listen-and-act" cards. On these cards you have written the basic actions and commands for a given lesson. Here are some rough guidelines for writing your own listen-and-act cards.

1. First, *review*. Begin with easy material—for example, some actions previously practiced, or a simple exercise.

2. Next, *new actions*, i.e., new vocabulary. Don't forget: the teacher demonstrates all new actions before asking the students to do them. The teacher must think up ways to present verbs as well as nouns. Usually, the more simply they are presented the better. You might collect a bag of props to help you in this phase. Your students will soon become familiar with the names of these props, but they can still help you demonstrate new actions. Don't overlook pictures and maps that can be brought into the room or even mounted permanently.

3. *Tasks*. In addition to erasing the board, tasks could include moving the tables and chairs to make additional space for your action lessons, folding chairs, dividing

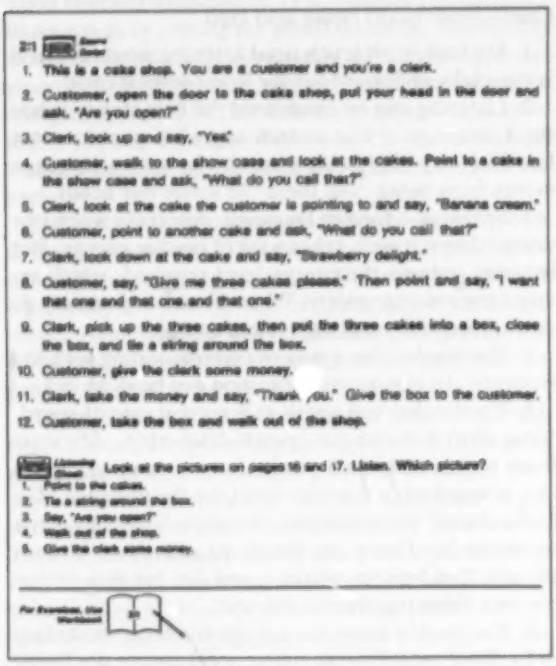
students into groups, doing physical exercises, playing with objects such as coins, and working at the board.

4. *Long sentences* for the conclusion. Several commands can be combined to form one, rather long command. It is also possible to create a unique form of a command. For example, if you had students point to their heads and you had them put a book on the table, you can ask them to put a book on their heads. They might be surprised at such an unusual command, but they will be able to understand.

In this way, several minutes to an entire class period can be devoted to listening, and a variety of actual tasks can be incorporated into your lesson.

From actions to minidramas

A minidrama is a short drama, initially presented in the command form, which includes a story or plot. It is easy to present in a typical classroom setting because it is written for that purpose. Here is a sample minidrama from my book *Listen and Act.*



21

1. This is a cake shop. You are a customer and you're a clerk.
2. Customer, open the door to the cake shop, put your head in the door and ask, "Are you open?"
3. Clerk, look up and say, "Yes."
4. Customer, walk to the show case and look at the cakes. Point to a cake in the show case and ask, "What do you call that?"
5. Clerk, look at the cake the customer is pointing to and say, "Banana cream."
6. Customer, point to another cake and ask, "What do you call that?"
7. Clerk, look down at the cake and say, "Strawberry delight."
8. Customer, say, "Give me three cakes please." Then point and say, "I want that one and that one and that one."
9. Clerk, pick up the three cakes, then put the three cakes into a box, close the box, and tie a string around the box.
10. Customer, give the clerk some money.
11. Clerk, take the money and say, "Thank you." Give the box to the customer.
12. Customer, take the box and walk out of the shop.

Look at the pictures on pages 16 and 17. Listen. Which picture?

1. Point to the cakes.
2. Tie a string around the box.
3. Say, "Are you open?"
4. Walk out of the shop.
5. Give the clerk some money.

For Exercises, Use Worksheet

There are at least two compelling reasons to expand the use of listen-and-act cards into these more involved minidramas. The first is that you will soon run out of classroom-centered actions and tasks. The second is that isolated actions have no continuity and little meaning in and of themselves. To put it another way, you will soon run out of things to do and will get bored. Classroom dramas, or what I am calling minidramas, extend the educational value of acting in response to commands by incorporating a story line, and can at the same time provide a bridge to roleplaying and unstructured conversations.

Following are some thoughts to be kept in mind when writing a minidrama.

1. Any situation of interest to the students can be used.

2. The commands constitute the listening aspect —which should be longer than the dialogue aspect.

3. The command form is used throughout.

4. Ideally, for every spoken line there is an action.

5. Minidramas can range from very simple to complex in terms of grammar, vocabulary, actions, or plot.

6. Props found in the classroom can be used (e.g., chalk, a book) or props can be brought into the classroom for use in the minidramas (e.g., a toy pistol, money).

To present your minidrama, first use related listen-and-act cards to warm up your class, and to introduce them to some of the actions and objects they will encounter in the minidrama. It is not necessary, however, to introduce all new vocabulary. In fact, some items are best introduced in the context of the drama itself. Actions such as "get in" are difficult to introduce. What could a student get into? But in a minidrama a student can easily get into a car represented by a chair.

Next, gather your props and have the students watch as you demonstrate every role of the minidrama. A tape is convenient because it not only saves your voice, it also leaves your hands free of the script. After the demonstration, pass out scripts and read together. When you are satisfied, call for some students to come forward. Designate one student to be the "reader." Only that student will have a script. The reader will direct the others to both act and speak. If this goes well, break the entire class into groups and have them perform simultaneously. Have the students rotate within groups so every student does every part, including the reading part. This process can be done in one class period or extended over several periods. If the minidrama is to be done again in a later class, you will not need to repeat this process. The second time, scripts can be quickly passed out: the students will do the performance in a fraction of the time.

Some reflections on the minidrama are in order. One obvious point is that the minidrama facilitates small-group work in large classes. The minidrama is one way to have every member of the class participate. A second point concerns teacher dynamics. You, the teacher, will be very busy at the beginning of a minidrama presentation. Then you will gradually move from the center of the classroom action to the sideline as you watch your students perform. A third point concerns student dynamics. You will notice the students in a group working together to help each other. The reader will repeat a line several times if necessary, for example. You will

not have to instruct the class to do this. By removing yourself to the edge of the action, you allow the students to move to the center and to act as teachers to each other. This could never occur in a traditional classroom, but happens automatically when students perform minidramas.

After your students have completed a minidrama, you have several options. One is to stop and do something else. Another is class performance. Another is to arrange with a fellow teacher to have his class become an audience for a performance. By this time the reader will not be necessary. The students will be surprised that they have memorized not only the actions but every word of the dialogue. Yet another option is roleplaying.

In a roleplay the teacher gives the students an open-ended situation and asks them to solve a problem. In a typical roleplay, for example, student A is assigned to be a waiter and student B is assigned to be a customer. Student B is told he has lost all his money, which he discovers only after he has eaten an expensive meal. Neither the students nor the teacher know what the solution will be. A roleplay gives the students a chance to practice a possible real-life situation. Sometimes this situation is from the student's own point of view and sometimes from a different point of view—e.g., the student plays a different sort of character than he normally is.

A roleplay usually consists of three parts: (1) a situation and character assignment, and (2) a problem that allows for (3) many possible endings, although society does provide some conventional solutions for common problems.

The purpose of the roleplay is not to teach or give the students new data. Rather, it is to provide practice for the language ability the students already have. It forces them to apply what they know and in some cases to innovate on their feet, so to speak. One of the issues involved in a roleplay is student confidence, and this is where minidramas can be helpful.

Whereas a roleplay is unstructured conversation and action, a minidrama is highly structured conversation and specified action. Therefore, participating in a minidrama gives the students a framework of confidence and prepares them for the freedom of the roleplay. If all else fails, the students have at least a minimum of language and action from the minidrama to get them through the roleplay. While some teachers may feel their classes are not ready for unstructured conversation, others find their classes are far enough along in English-language study to benefit from and enjoy this adventure.

To use the minidrama to set up a roleplay situation, first practice a minidrama until the students can do it without a reader. The teacher might, at this point, supplement the minidrama with additional language such as objects to buy, prices, types of hotel rooms, etc. Now several minidramas can be linked together. For example, after practicing minidramas that involve getting a room in a hotel, buying pastries in a cake shop, and withdrawing money from a bank at which a robbery occurs, students can be requested to do them in a sequence—in other words, one after the other. Or they can be requested to pull aspects of these dramas together in a new form. The instructions might be to arrange for a room in a hotel, then go into the hotel cake shop and buy something. While this is going on, the teacher might hand a toy pistol to another student and encourage a robbery, leaving it up to the student whether to steal money or cakes. Another twist is to specify the location. Simply locating the cake shop at Waikiki Beach in Hawaii energizes students. Many have actually been there, but even those who haven't seem to have a very clear image of what Hawaii is like. Finally, the teacher might also stipulate a reason for being there, such as a honeymoon.

Conclusion: good news and bad

1. Students at all levels need listening practice, but it is especially important for the lower-level student.

2. Listening can be considered the first step in learning a language. "One cannot say what one does not know" (Gary 1978). Listening is the way a language moves from being "out there" to inside our heads.

3. Speaking a foreign language, especially when one doesn't know it well, takes a lot of psychic energy. But listening reduces the energy level required, which reduces tension and anxiety. When tension and anxiety go down, receptivity and enjoyment go up.

4. The teacher has a way of communicating with the students. All classroom instruction can be done in L_2.

5. The teacher can speak at a normal rate of speed. You-don't-have-to-speak-like-this. Students listen not to individual words, but to meaning, a skill that is required in the real world. In the sentence "Go to the door," most students would probably hear on a conscious level only the words *go* and *door*. Unconsciously they hear the words *to* and *the*, but they probably hear them together as one unit.

6. The teacher has a strategy for teaching vocabulary in L_2. Since most English native speakers are not fluent in Japanese, one of their common problems is how to teach vocabulary. They can try for an approximate word in Japanese, but this is risky business. Usually if they can't explain the meaning, they have to give up and have the students go to their English-Japanese dictionaries. Students learn the meanings of words in many ways, and there is no single best teaching method I know of. Teachers use gestures, pictures, translation, dictionaries, other teachers who are conversant in both languages: in fact, anything that works. But by using an

active listening technique, the teacher can introduce not only basic words but also key explanatory words such as the words *same* and *different*. For example, most Japanese students are familiar with the English word *difficult* because it is the accepted translation of the Japanese word *muzukashi*, which is a very common word in the vocabulary of a Japanese student. But they are usually not familiar with the English word *hard*. One of the common meanings of the word *hard* is "difficult." Having taught the key explanatory words *same* and *different*, the teacher can more easily explain that *hard* means the same as *difficult*.

Can everything be taught using listening and acting? Those of us who use the listen-and-act technique are frequently asked how we would teach the meaning of abstract words such as *democracy*. Those who ask this question never explain exactly why they would want to teach these words to a class, especially a low-level class. James Asher, the educational psychologist most associated with learning through actions—he coined the term Total Physical Response or TPR—suggests teaching abstract words by writing the words on cards. The teacher would then give such commands as "Louise, give democracy to Bud; Pauline, pick up justice from the table and give it to Ken." This strikes me as pushing a technique beyond its capability. Asher is more realistic when he cautions against introducing abstract words too early.

The answer is, of course, don't teach abstract words to low-level students. There is no reason to; the teacher would be jumping too far ahead. Before trying to teach abstractions, work on the concrete action verbs and nouns. After learning several hundred basic words, students can be taught the meanings of more abstract vocabulary items by means of these simpler words.

There is, however, another group of words that is difficult to teach using learning through actions. This is the group that is used to indicate personal desires or feelings—words such as *should*, *like*, and *want*. False beginners usually know the lexical meaning of these words. Their main problem is recognizing such words when they hear them. For these students the teacher doesn't have to "teach" the words so much as practice them. The words will not be appropriate in the commands you write on your listen-and-act cards. However, they can be used in your minidramas because the context will carry the meaning. And for true beginners, you might have to use some of the more traditional methods of conveying meaning—even translation.

Learning through action is a dynamic tool in the hands of a prepared teacher, and minidramas extend and amplify that dynamic. But my last words are of caution. No technique, no textbook can carry you through a class, much less a career. Variety is still the spice of life. Our fate as language teachers is always to be adapting new techniques and to supplement any text we use—even one we have written ourselves. We are like carpenters, always building. We try the impossible. Our fate is always to fail. But in daring the impossible we claim this fate as our destiny.

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3. In the third scene, listen for the word that means the opposite of "honor."

Questions such as these can obviously range from the very simple to the very complex and can thus be used at practically all levels of fluency. However, one should resist the temptation to overuse pre-questions. I usually have found it practical to give no more than five or six pre-questions per viewing; students should not have so many individual things to watch for that their overall comprehension is reduced or the pleasure of viewing is decreased. I also encourage my students to try to remember the answers to the questions rather than write them down; students who try to compose paragraph-long answers to pre-questions during the showing of the video are likely to miss something important that is occurring on the screen.

Viewing the tape

After preparing the class for the video through vocabulary lessons and discussion and after distributing all pre-questions and passive vocabulary lists, the instructor is ready to present the selected tape to the class. Because attention spans tend to be short and boredom can be compounded by the difficulties of trying to decode a foreign language, I have found that 45 minutes to an hour of video tape is the maximum that should be presented at any one time. Longer tapes of performances, debates, or documentaries should be broken into segments and shown during different class sessions. This also allows ample time to cover the vocabulary and grammar present in each segment of tape.

One of the marvelous features of the VCR as compared to the standard film projector is the ease with which the tape can be stopped, reversed, and advanced. The EFL instructor should utilize all of these features as necessary. For example, after a section of tape that seems likely to incite discussion, the tape can be stopped and a discussion held. If, for instance, a reference is made during a news program to the students' home country or continent, the instructor can question the students about their reaction to the coverage, the biases that they perceive in the coverage, and their opinions on the issue. Differences of opinion among the students can be explored and, by reversing the tape, possibly resolved by replaying the section that is being discussed. Thus if one student suggests that a remark made by a newscaster was racist or severely biased, the remark can be reexamined and other opinions solicited.

Likewise the "stop" button can be used if there is any question in the instructor's mind about whether or not the students adequately understood a particular section of tape. Puzzled looks, whispered questions between students, and direct requests for explanation are signs that there are comprehension problems; the tape can be easily stopped and the students asked a short series of comprehension questions to determine whether explanation (perhaps solicited from another student) is necessary. If the instructor feels that the problem was caused by too much occurring too quickly on the screen, perhaps a simple reshowing of the section would be a sufficient remedy. If, on the other hand, there is some grammar or vocabulary that is hindering full comprehension, perhaps the tape should be reversed and the section in question explored sentence by sentence until the students and instructor are satisfied. Difficult grammar can be handled at the moment the problem is discovered or can be deferred to the next class meeting. Certainly, however, too many disruptions during a viewing can also lessen comprehension and prove quite irritating for some students; therefore while the "stop" and "reverse" buttons should be used as necessary, they can also be overused and detract from the success of the class.

Likewise the "fast forward" button is of great use to the instructor. Sections that are too difficult, too simple, or irrelevant should be skipped over as long as this does not destroy the overall sense of the presented material. During some privately recorded tapes, for example, advertisements may have been included that are unimportant or even insulting; these can be easily edited out of the class viewing. Sections of news programs dealing with obscure local events or very complex domestic issues can also be deleted.

One other useful technique that can be used during the showing of a video to test skills such as recognition of antonyms and synonyms is to hand out a short multiple-choice exercise that students can quickly check off when a specific point comes up in the tape. For example, the instructor can type up and distribute an exercise such as this:

During the video you will hear words that you already know used with a prefix that makes them negative. When you hear the negative of the word in capital letters, make a mark beside its correct form on your paper or mark "none of the above" if it does not appear in the list.

1. EMPLOYMENT
   ( ) disemployment
   ( ) inemployment
   ( ) unemployment
   ( ) none of the above

The students should, of course, be given the list before the video begins and have the opportunity to look over the capitalized words carefully. One should also take care that the words in the exercise appear in the same order as they do in the tape; this reduces confusion. I have often used this exercise profitably in my class. By giving them a list to check rather than asking them to write the word down, their attention is drawn from the

video for a shorter length of time and they are less likely to miss important information.

After viewing the tape

There are many exercises and classroom activities that can be developed for use after the tape has been presented to the class. One writing exercise that is useful is for the instructor to ask the students to write a simple paragraph synopsis of what they have seen and/or heard. This aids in the development of summarizing and extracting skills and also serves as a comprehension check. Another writing exercise that is particularly useful for business and economics students, is for the instructor to give the class facts, figures, or statistics from the video and ask for a visual representation (such as a graph, chart, or figure) of the information. This not only reinforces comprehension of what was said during the video but also serves to increase the students' abilities at interpreting and analyzing charts and graphs, an important source of business information.

Any number of writing exercises can be developed using the video as a basis for further thought. For example, one might ask the students to write a letter to a character, politician, or newsman from the video, expressing their opinion on a particular subject. Such letters can examine questions of semantics, giving the students the opportunity to explore how language can be variously interpreted, or can deal with simple differences of opinion on a given issue. A variation of this is to ask the students to write a letter to the U.S. Secretary of State or President, expressing the African (or Asian or Central American) perspective on some news event or issue. Such letters could then be mailed, giving the students an immediate sense of accomplishment and purpose in their English studies.

Of course, any of these ideas could be developed in paragraph or essay form rather than letter form. Other topics for writing assignments include:

1. What observations can you make about American society based on the video you saw?
2. Do you agree with the newscaster that _____ is the cause of _____?
3. Who do you think "won" the debate? Why do you think so?

There are, of course, many other possible topics that can be developed around the specific issues raised in a particular video; even sports videos can serve as a basis for papers on topics such as these:

1. Why are sports important to society (or people) today?
2. Should countries or individuals be represented in the Olympics?
3. What does it feel like to win?

Thus topics could lead to descriptive, informative, or persuasive essays centered on the video that was presented.

Likewise, videos can be used to generate various exercises that help develop speaking skills. On the most basic level, videos can lead to a general discussion on the tape or the issues raised in the tape. The instructor can also elicit discussion by asking questions ranging from the very general ("What are some of the emotions you saw expressed during the video?") to the very specific ("Why do you feel _____ answered questions *angrily* during this debate?") on what the students saw or heard during the tape. Discussion might revolve around areas as simple as colors, sensations, shapes, or textures, or as complex as motivations, causes, results, or relationships.

Videos may also be used as a basis for in-class debates or dialogues. These may be approached in a number of different ways. For instance, student disagreements about issues or interpretations can be organized into a semi-formal "debate" on the topic. It is not necessary to introduce formal debate procedure into the class; a student or group of students can be told to prepare a five-minute argument for their position and be ready to defend their position in relation to the other person's or group's prepared statement. A variation on this exercise is to have students assume certain roles and prepare an argument to support a specific character's or person's position. For instance, after seeing a debate or disagreement between two people, students might prepare a synopsis of each person's position. This can then be memorized or read to the class with the object of speaking in a "natural" manner. This also allows students to practice their skills in summarizing the material. Students may also be given the freedom in this exercise to move beyond what is explicitly stated in the video and present as arguments things that are only implied or hinted at during the tape. Thus, again, these exercises can range from the very simple to the very complex, depending on the level of the class.

If the instructor has the time to prepare a script of some or all of the material presented in the video, a couple of different exercises can be developed from it. For instance, students can read aloud news reports or sports commentary in order to improve intonation, pronunciation, and other speaking skills. The differences in the way one reports a natural disaster and the manner in which a sports announcer comments on a track and field event can be examined, the script introduced, and role-playing initiated. A variation on this exercise is for the class to carefully reexamine segments of the tape and try to copy as closely as possible the speaking styles of the people in the video. Such exercises can be used to practice "natural" speaking or in conjunction with a discussion on accent or tone.

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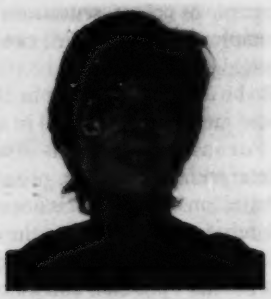
On Teaching *Before* and *After* to Children

DIANE PONTEROTTO
University of L'Aquila



DIANE PONTEROTTO does research in language learning and behavior at the University of L'Aquila, Italy.

Dulay and Burt published a paper (1974a) that described longitudinal studies of the acquisition of some syntactic structures by children learning English as a second language. They noted that whereas some errors produced in the course of L_2 acquisition could be attributed to interference from the native language, others were similar to the errors reported in first-language-acquisition studies of English. They hypothesized that this second type of error was of a developmental nature, common to all children regardless of their native language.

Interest began to develop in second-language research about the similarity of first- and second-language acquisition. Just as a natural order of acquisition was found to exist for first-language acquisition (Brown 1973), perhaps a natural sequence also exists for second-language acquisition. Experimental studies of children from different backgrounds found the same acquisition patterns in child learners regardless of their native language. Dulay and Burt (1974b) reported that Chinese- and Spanish-speaking children acquired functors in approximately the same order. In an earlier investigation of Spanish-speaking children the same authors had also observed a common order of acquisition for some structures; this order was different, however, from that found in first-language-acquisition studies (Dulay and Burt 1973). The researchers claim that their findings provide "strong support for the existence of universal child learning strategies" (1974b:37).

This direction of research was a natural development of the tendency away from interference/contrastive analysis in second-language learning, which had started with the plea to consider the learner's "built-in syllabus" (Corder 1967). In other words, the learner's performance in the target language was now considered an *interlanguage* (Selinker 1972), having its own grammatical rules and communicative strategies. Moreover, it was assumed that the learner's competence progresses from one systemic stage to another (Nemser 1971). Learners' errors were therefore deviations from the standpoint of the target-language grammar, but regularities within the interim grammar (Richards 1971).

Application to foreign-language teaching

It was hoped that this kind of research would be useful in language teaching by providing clues for curriculum planning. If morphosyntactic structures are indeed learned in a predictable order, textbook writers and teachers can have clearer guidelines as to when to teach what. However, further research on this question is required to enable us to define exactly what this "natural" order is. Krashen has remarked:

> Grammatical sequencing assumes that we know the order of acquisition of all structures presented. We only have data on a few structures in a few of the better studied languages, enough to hypothesize that a natural order exists, but not

enough to provide detailed information to syllabus designers for different languages. (1981:104)

Krashen claims therefore that grammatical sequencing is "undesirable" and even "unnecessary" (1981:103), since the possibility exists that "grammar may take care of itself" (1981:104; cf. also Dulay and Burt 1973).

Although this objection to sequencing is justifiable, teachers may find that it renders course organization extremely difficult. Most teachers seem to need a corpus of language data that provides reasonable course objectives for their students.

I would like therefore to make a suggestion that will both respect this caution about serializing the L_2 structures to be learned, and, at the same time, offer some kind of sequential organization of language-teaching strategy.

I suggest that while we are waiting for the air to clear on the natural-order question, we exploit those areas of first-language acquisition that give us definite clues as to the general modalities of language acquisition in child development. I shall illustrate this suggestion with a concrete example: the acquisition of the temporal conjunctions *before* and *after* in children.

Whether we as teachers intuitively accept or refuse the natural-order hypothesis, we will all admit that there is a difference between adults and children in language learning. Many aspects of child second-language-learner strategy involve the fact that the child is in a developmental stage, and has not yet completed his cognitive and linguistic maturation. Therefore, when a teacher of young children approaches curriculum planning, she/he must select language data that correspond to the children's stage of cognitive development.

Let's take as an example the time framework of a particular L_2.

Temporal patterns are very difficult to teach in a foreign language. The logical organization of time is reflected in the grammatical organization of time in different ways in different languages. For example, English requires the speaker to mark an event as *durative* or *non-durative* (Wilkins 1976:26–27). In French, duration is expressed by periphrasis: *Je suis en train de lire.* In Italian, the mark of duration exists for some tenses, but is not obligatory; the same verb can have both a durative and a non-durative meaning; e.g., *Leggo* = "I am reading" or "I read."

Clark's study

In teaching children, the situation is further complicated by the fact that they often do not have a clear understanding of the devices that mark time in their language. With regard to temporal conjunctions, it has been shown that children sometimes resort to other decodification strategies in order to interpret complex sentences. Clark (1969, 1970) found that children rely on an order-of-mention strategy for the meaning of *before* and *after.* In other words, they interpret events in the order in which they are described, regardless of the temporal conjunctions that organize their relationship. *Before eating dinner, I played ball* would be interpreted by children as eating dinner first and then playing ball. Another study demonstrated, moreover, that there is a distinct increase of children's knowledge of the words *before* and *after* between the ages 3.0 and 5.0 (Clark 1971).

In this study, four stages of comprehension resulted for the temporal conjunctions *before* and *after.* In the first stage, children understood neither *before* nor *after* (in a production task, the children produced *when* in the early stages); in the second stage, the children understood *before* only; in the third stage, they confused the two conjunctions; and in the fourth, the children understood both words correctly.

Clark notes that a semantic-component description of the temporal conjunctions *when, before,* and *after* would yield the following:

Considering Clark's experimental results, therefore, children seem to acquire first the component + Time and + Simultaneous but do not know any –Simultaneous words. This would account for their use of *when* and their lack of knowledge of *before* and *after.* They then learn that some words indicate a serial rather than a simultaneous relation between events and acquire the feature –Simultaneous.

Subsequently, they know that *before* contains + Time, –Simultaneous, and + Prior. Since both *before* and *after* contain –Simultaneous, when children confuse them, they apparently think that –Simultaneous also implies + Prior. But finally they learn that it is the + Prior/–Prior value that distinguishes between the meaning of *before* (+ Prior) and *after* (–Prior).

Finally, they use the conjunctions as adults do. Furthermore, Clark notes that the child learns the positive values of a component before its negative component: + Simultaneous before –Simultaneous, + Prior before –Prior. Clark concludes that children learn the meaning of words component by component, and that where

these components are hierarchically related to each other, the feature "hierarchy" is learned in the order beginning from the superordinate component. "In the case of our temporal conjunctions, the child learns first the component +Time, then the component ± Simultaneous, then the component ± Prior" (1971:275).

A suggested order of presentation

I believe that this kind of study can give us some indication of the order of presentation of temporal conjunctions in English L_2 to children. As a general rule:

1. With young children, we should avoid introducing concepts for which there has not yet been completion of L_1 linguistic and cognitive acquisition.

2. We can adopt an order of presentation for those structures for which we have sufficient evidence from first-language-acquisition research.

Specifically, with regard to the temporal conjunctions, we could suggest:

1. The order of presentation should be *when*, then *before*, and finally *after*.

2. *Before* and *after* should not be taught contemporaneously.

This second point contrasts with a general tendency in TEFL to teach pairs of relational terms simultaneously. In other words, we often present in the same lesson *hot/cold, tall/short, big/small*, etc. Child-development research has shown, however, that children do not interpret these pairs as adults do (Donaldson and Balfour 1968). Donaldson and Wales (1970) showed that children learn the positive member of a pair first—e.g., *high* before *low*. Moreover, they sometimes interpret the negative member as positive. As far as *before* and *after* are concerned, since Clark's 1971 experiment revealed a definite stage of confusion of the two terms, it would be wise to give children time to assimilate how one conjunction organizes the relation between two events before teaching the antinomous conjunction.

3. Given the apparent length of time required to understand the meaning of these temporal conjunctions, I would suggest dedicating much time to the description of events in the order in which they occur, and only much later proceeding to the concept of "prior" and the conjunction *before*. Once the teacher is assured that the children have grasped the meaning and use of *before*, the conjunction *after* could be approached and eventually placed in relation to *before*. We have thereby reversed our traditional teaching technique. The relational pair *before/after* would be our arrival point rather than our starting point.

What about older learners?

Could this order of presentation apply to other age groups as well—to older children, adolescents, and adults? I remember that my son, while learning English in a natural communicative setting, and having achieved adequate communicative proficiency, remarked to me, "I just can't seem to get *before* and *after*. I always confuse them." He was 12 at the time.

We have very little knowledge of the modalities of adult second-language acquisition. If there is something "natural" about second-language learning, as has been suggested by the research, the order-of-acquisition hypothesis could be explored for adults as well as for children. Analogies between children and adults have in fact resulted in some experimental studies. Palermo and Howe (1970) demonstrated a similarity in the learning of past-tense inflections; Stoltz and Tiffany (1972) demonstrated analogies in word association. In Cook (1973), a similarity in syntactic comprehension resulted. Moreover, the morpheme sequence that resulted in an experimental study of L_2 acquisition in adults (Bailey et al. 1974) is very similar to that reported by Dulay and Burt (1973, 1974b) for children.

I would suggest that when teaching temporal conjunctions to different age groups, it is perhaps wise to follow the order I have suggested but to vary the pace of presentation. In fact, second-language research has shown that when learners' order of acquisition is similar, the rate of acquisition may vary considerably. Fathman (1975), for example, found that older children learned more rapidly than younger children. Snow and Hoefnagel-Höhle (1978) found that adolescents and adults made the fastest progress in learning Dutch during the first few months, and that older children and adolescents achieved the best proficiency by the end of a year. With older learners, we should perhaps simply go faster. With adults, however, we would probably have to present the relational antinomy *before/after* contemporaneously. Experience tells us that if we teach an adult *before*, we will immediately be asked about its opposite.

Until the modalities of second-language acquisition can be defined by psycholinguistics and related disciplines, second-language teachers must still grapple with the problem of the what, when, and how of language learning. At present there is no direct evidence to show that second-language learning is similar to first-language learning; nor is there evidence to the contrary. As always, we need to experiment with theoretical assumptions directly in the second-language classroom. What we must be wary of is carrying partial theoretical results to their extreme consequences in teaching practice. If, however, we are extremely selective in our choice of theoretical premises, classroom practice can even provide feedback for the language-learning theorists. In other words, instead of "trying this 'method' or that 'approach,' we could experiment at the more restricted level of technique, with the aim, however, of understanding if and how a particular procedure is related to general theory on language learning.

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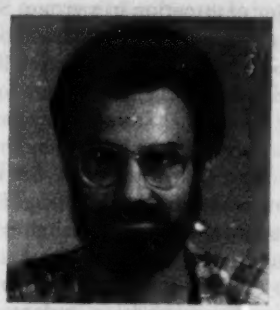
Making Small-Group Discussions Even Better

GEORGE JACOBS
Chiang Mai University



GEORGE JACOBS teaches at Chiang Mai University and the American University Alumni Association in Chiang Mai. Prior to going to Thailand he taught in the United States and China. Mr. Jacobs holds an M.A. in linguistics, with a specialization in TESOL, from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Many ESL instructors are getting away from a teacher-centered style in conversation classes by setting up small-group discussions (Williams 1984). During these discussions, teachers usually move around the room listening, observing, occasionally making comments or asking questions on the topic, and being available if students have brief questions about English. However, teachers do not interrupt to teach about language. In assessing the value of such activities, the question arises, "Yes, the students are practicing what they have already learned, but are they improving their English ability?"

Maybe they are. In other courses—reading, writing, etc.—and at other times during conversation class, students can learn new language and get feedback from teachers. Small-group discussions can be viewed as opportunities for students to review and reinforce what they have already learned, thereby increasing fluency.

In these small groups, students often discuss subjects they have never before talked about in English. They gain satisfaction and confidence by putting to use what they have studied. And if they are really involved in the discussions, communication is taking place rather than just an exercise.

There are many good sources for topics, including the students' and teacher's imaginations. I especially recommend the topics and techniques suggested in *Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class* (Moskowitz 1978). Some teachers may think that the humanistically oriented topics in the book are too "touchy-feely" for their taste,[1] but please try a few. You may find that students enjoy talking about themselves and their classmates, and that, as a result of the discussions, a more cohesive atmosphere develops in the class. The book also has much helpful advice on conducting discussions.

Preparing for discussion

Sometimes teachers feel that discussion itself is not enough: a learning point should accompany it. Williams (1984) and Moskowitz (1978) suggest grammar points that are appropriate to given topics. Reviewing a specific grammatical structure that is likely to occur in the discussion might help students use the structure, and use it correctly, in the conversations that follow.

Preparation in suitable vocabulary can also be valuable. Moskowitz (1978) includes lists of useful adjectives. Alexander et al., in *Take a Stand* (1978) and *Talk It Over* (1978), familiarize students with vocabulary by having them read short pieces on the subject to be discussed. This material also gives students ideas about

I would like to express thanks to Marshall Palmer, Mark Gordon, John Gunther, and Mary H. Gladney for contributing ideas used in this article.

1. EDITOR'S NOTE: *too "touchy-feely" for their taste* = more concerned with the sharing of personal feelings than they are comfortable with.

points to bring up during the conversations.

One way of helping students generate their own ideas is to announce the topic during the previous class and ask students to write a paragraph or so about it. This writing is only to get them to think about the topic; they should not come to class with prepared speeches.

Another possible prediscussion activity is review of functions. Sometimes I try to anticipate which functions will be useful and go over them before the discussion begins, in order to refresh students' memories. This review of functions shows students ways to express themselves and it helps them to use more authentic English. Occasionally, this kind of preparation can make the difference between a conversation's dying after a few minutes or going on in a lively manner for the rest of the period. (See *Functions of American English* by Jones and von Baeyer [1983] for functions useful to high intermediate and advanced students.)

In considering which functions to review, we should not forget that every discussion has at least two participants. We must consider not only the functions needed by the initial speaker, but also those useful to the listener(s). In order to have interaction, instead of alternating monologues students need to ask questions and make comments. Questions and comments help the speaker feel that what s/he says is really listened to and not treated as just another bit of classroom business.

I think that questions are particularly important. Students do have questions—they want to know more—but sometimes lack the means to express themselves. Also, they have more of an investment in the discussion if they ask questions (Nelson 1984).

Two useful types of questions are: (1) those for clarification (e.g., "I'm sorry. I didn't understand. Could you say that again, please?") and (2) those for additional information (e.g., "How did you feel then?"). In the prediscussion period, we can ask students to suggest possible questions and comments suitable to the topic.

Some examples of how functions other than questions may be useful can be found in a discussion of how to achieve or maintain good health. The first student can use the function of expressing intention (e.g., "I think I should try . . . "), while the partner(s) can use the function of giving advice (e.g., "I heard that . . . is a good idea"). Then the roles are reversed. Or, even better, there is a continuous back-and-forth exchange of roles. Functions can help students interact so that they are not just passively waiting for their turn to tell their story but can actively participate.

Some problems can arise from prediscussion teaching. Students may lock into the material supplied by the teacher and treat the discussion as an exercise. They may use the material mechanically, and when they have gone through it all, think there is nothing more to say. If this happens, we should help the students change their view of discussions, and also consider whether we are presenting them correctly.

The teacher's role in discussions

What should the teacher do while the students are talking? Generally, he should participate in the discussion, observing the language used (remembering to listen for what the students do *right* as well as what they do wrong) and how the conversation is progressing, as well as enjoying the interesting exchanges. He can be available to supply an appropriate word or usage pattern, if asked. Also, it is good for the teacher to share his own experiences and feelings about the topic.

However, it is important that the teacher avoid becoming the center of attention in a group. Students are accustomed to a teacher-centered classroom. All too easily, the person who is speaking begins talking only to the teacher, while the others in the group look off elsewhere, awaiting their turn to talk to the teacher. Sometimes the conversations are so interesting that it is difficult to restrain myself from jumping in, but I try to keep my contributions to a minimum. Two ways I keep out of the spotlight are by putting my chair slightly outside the group's circle and by not looking directly at the speaker.

One fear that teachers have about group discussions is that without teacher supervision students will not use English. This is indeed a problem. Several techniques can be used in attacking it. The first is to explain that this is English class, the students' opportunity for using English: they are wasting their time and money by speaking their native language. Believe it or not, this technique actually works sometimes.

Another technique is to tell the students that they can say in their native language words they do not know in English, but the rest of the sentence should be in English. For example, if students do not know the word "tea," they can use the native word for tea, but say everything else in English. So, an acceptable sentence (for Thai students) would be "My father always felt better after he drank a glass of *cha*." In this way, the flow of the conversation can continue with little disruption.

An additional way to encourage use of English is the three-tries principle. This means that a learner gets three tries to understand what is said in English or to make himself understood in English before using the native language. For example, if a student has said, "My English teacher in high school was a very inspiring person. She made me want to be an English teacher, too," and another student did not understand right away, the speaker should try to make the meaning clear by repeating and/or rephrasing. Only after trying in English three times should translation be used.

Another technique that has been successful is to use fines for not speaking English. I used this with Japanese college students in Hawaii. The students decided on a

certain amount to be paid each time someone used Japanese; the money collected was saved for a party at the end of the term. Often fines really put people on their toes, and little of the native language is used.

Maybe you will not want to completely stop all translating, because it can lessen frustration and make conversations smoother. In that case, you could allow translation with the teacher's or other students' permission.

One final thought: teachers should not panic at the first silence from a discussion group. Let students try to reactivate things on their own. Part of creating a student-centered environment is having students see the class not as the teacher's, but as theirs. This means the learners take responsibility for making activities go well. Also, silence does not necessarily mean that nothing useful is happening. Students may be thinking of what to say or how to say it; the teacher should give them a chance.

Follow-up activities

Once the discussions have ended, the teacher needs to decide whether he wants to do any kind of follow-up. Sometimes none may be necessary, or there may be no time. If he wants to have an activity following group work, there are many possibilities. These will vary according to the topic.

When learners have been having an opinion or problem-solving discussion, it can be continued with the whole class. People will be interested to hear what other groups said. Sometimes, each group can give a report about their discussion. Moskowitz has another suggestion. She suggests that people talk about how they felt while having the discussion. Another possibility, to be used with caution, is to go over students' use of a particular language point. Here, the good things said, as well as the not-so-good, should be mentioned.

Teachers in conversation class can utilize small-group discussions as a communicative setting for students to review and actively use their current level of English. If teachers want to supplement these discussions, they should consider review of functions as well as grammar and vocabulary.

The following are examples of discussion topics with some possible accompanying functions. It is important to consider the level of the students when choosing which examples of the functions to teach.

Timid? Not I.[2]

Tell about a time when you were afraid you could not do something, but you tried and succeeded.

A. *Initial speaker*—controlling a narrative, hesitating
   1. At first, I . . .
   2. After that, uh . . .
   3. And then, do you know what happened next?
   4. So finally, you see um . . .
   5. I was surprised when . . .

B. *Initial listener(s)*—asking about the past
   1. What happened next?
   2. How did you feel when . . . ?
   3. What did . . . say?
   4. Weren't you afraid?
   5. Where did this happen?

If I Could Speak English Fluently, . . .

A. *Initial speaker*—talking about the possible future
   1. It would be great. I'd be able to . . .
   2. If I could speak English fluently, I wouldn't have to . . .
   3. I suppose I might . . .
   4. Every day I would . . .
   5. . . . would be much easier.

B. *Initial listener(s)*—asking about the possible future
   1. Where would you go?
   2. Why would you want to do that?
   3. What would you talk about?
   4. Anything else?
   5. How would that make you feel?

Search for Someone Who . . .[3]

This is good for the beginning of the term to help students get to know each other. Students are given a list of 15 or 20 characteristics, e.g., likes to eat carrots, plays tennis, goes to the movies often, has visited the U.S. Then students move around the room trying to find people who fit the different characteristics. After they ask one student a question, they must move on and ask the others before asking the same student again.

A. *Initial speaker*—asking for information
   1. Excuse me, . . . ?
   2. Hello, I was wondering if . . .
   3. Have you ever . . . ?
   4. Oh, that's interesting. Please tell me more about that.
   5. Really, have you . . . also?

B. *Initial listener(s)*—responding to yes/no questions
   1. No. I'm sorry, but I don't.
   2. Yes, I do. What about you?
   3. No, I haven't . . . , but I'd like to.
   4. I don't . . . , but I . . .
   5. Yes, and I also . . .

Is It Better to Be 20 or 40 Years Old?[4]

Students discuss the pros and cons of the two ages, say-

2. The idea for this exercise and the title are taken from *Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class* by Gertrude Moskowitz.

3. The idea for this exercise and the title are taken from *Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class* by Gertrude Moskowitz.

4. The idea for this exercise and the title are taken from *Take a Stand* by L. G. Alexander, R. Kingsbury, and John Chapman.

ing which they would rather be and why.

A. *Initial speaker*—expressing preferences and opinions
   1. I'd rather be . . . , because . . .
   2. All things considered, . . .
   3. I'd prefer to be . . . , because . . .
   4. If you ask me, . . .
   5. As I see it, . . .

B. *Initial listener(s)*—agreeing and disagreeing
   1. I agree with . . .
   2. That's the way I feel too, because . . .
   3. I see what you mean, but . . .
   4. I'm afraid I disagree.
   5. Well, you have a point there, but . . .

What I Should Do to Maintain or Achieve Good Health Is . . .

Health is a popular topic these days, and everyone seems to have a plan for achieving good health. Moskowitz (1978) warns against topics that could cause negative feelings, but this one has, in my experience, always led to positive feelings.

A. *Initial speaker*—stating intentions
   1. I think I should . . .
   2. I ought to . . .
   3. Starting tomorrow, I'm definitely not going to . . . anymore.
   4. Every day I'll try to . . .
   5. It would probably be a good idea for me to . . .

B. *Initial listener(s)*—asking for additional information, gently giving advice
   1. Where did you hear about that idea?
   2. Could you be more specific, please?
   3. That sounds like a good idea. How do you do it?
   4. I heard that . . . is a good idea?
   5. . . . worked for me.

Drawing Pictures[5]

This is done in pairs and is more of a game than a discussion. There is an information gap. Student A has a picture or drawing that student B does not see. B draws according to A's instructions. A can look on while B is drawing, or they can compare pictures at the end.

A. *Student A*—giving instructions, getting confirmation
   1. First, you . . .
   2. Be careful not to . . .
   3. The next step is to . . .
   4. Got it?
   5. Is that clear?

B. *Student B*—receiving instructions
   1. Slow down, please.
   2. Could you be a little more specific?
   3. Sorry, can you say that again, please?
   4. How long should it be?
   5. Hold it a minute. You lost me.

5. The idea for this exercise and the title are taken from *Communication Games* by the English Language Teaching Institute.

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The VCR in the EFL Classroom

continued from page 27

Although videos are not as useful a source of reading exercises as they are of listening, speaking, and writing exercises, the instructor can make out-of-class reading assignments which deal with the same topic or which present a different perspective on the issue. If a news program is viewed by the class, the instructor may wish to assign or hand out a newspaper article dealing with the same event. This could lead to a discussion of perspective or bias and could, in turn, generate additional writing or speaking assignments.

Conclusion

The VCR, though still somewhat expensive and difficult to purchase in many parts of the world, is a useful educational tool in the EFL classroom. Certainly, however, its usefulness varies according to the purpose of the class; it is not as helpful in a class devoted wholly to reading skills as it is in a conversation class. Therefore the instructor who has access to a VCR or the opportunity to purchase a VCR should carefully evaluate how the machine can be integrated into the class and whether or not it will substantially aid in the attainment of class goals. Most instructors, however, will probably come to the conclusion that the VCR represents an opportunity for stimulating discussion and writing and can serve as the focal point of many interesting and productive class sessions. The relatively large investment of money and preparation time will usually pay off in the substantial benefits of increased student interest and progress. ■

On Teaching *Before* and *After* to Children

continued from page 30

The psychological factor

As far as the natural-order hypothesis of current research is concerned, the example I have given shows that, in selecting the linguistic input for the second-language classroom, an order of presentation of some

items may be successfully adopted if we attend to the psychological reality rather than to the strictly grammatical definition of sequencing in language learning.

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FORUM NEWS & IDEAS

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

CALL Technique in EFL

ZHANG CHUAN-DE
Xian Jiao-tong University

A calculator can help a student not only with calculation but also with language learning. When read upside down, the numbers on a pocket calculator (excluding 6) resemble the following letters:

1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	0
I	Z	E	H	S	L	B	G	O

With the aid of a computer, I have worked out the maximum number of possible combinations of the nine letters, of which about 150 can be considered to be English words (see Appendix). These words, though very limited in number, cover several parts of speech: personal pronouns (*he, she,* etc.), proper nouns (*Bill, Elise,* etc.), verbs and their finite forms (*is, go/es, seize/s,* etc.), adjectives (*high, big,* etc.), nouns (*bee, hill, shoe, egg,* etc.), and exclamations (*hi, hello,* etc.). With these words, some phrases and even simple sentences can be formed. For example, *high hill; big eggs; Bill giggles; Elise seizes big bees.* But on a single calculator only one word can be displayed at a time with a maximum of eight letters (e.g., *eggshell*). This correlation between number combinations and their upside-down reading as English words has led to my own CALL (Calculator-Assisted Language Learning) technique in the EFL classroom.

I have used this technique for more than three years with students of EFL at various levels. My successful experience has shown that this technique can be very effective and also fun, and can provide an outlet for communication in a nonstressful situation. Here I would like to share my CALL technique with EFL teachers.

For individual activity

Ask the student to work out .3867 times 2 on his/her calculator and then turn it upside down. He/she will find the calculator greeting him/her by displaying the word HELLO. This small example illustrates how the CALL technique works. Obviously, this technique can provide immediate feedback for the teacher, and convenience in evaluating the student's listening comprehension of English numbers, which is often a difficult point for EFL students.

For higher-level students the teacher may read an arithmetic operation, say, 98,659,005 – 21,313,012, for the individual student to work out. (The result is 77,345,993.) When read upside down the figure looks like the English word EGGSHELL. The student's discovery of this word is proof that he/she has listened and calculated correctly. Alternatively, the teacher may make up arithmetic puzzles based on the chosen arithmetic expressions. For example, the upside-down reading

Zhang Chuan-de has taught EFL for the past 20 years at Xian Jiao-tong University. He has been researching computer-aided EFL and CFL (Chinese as a foreign language) for two years. Mr. Zhang's interests include designing classroom techniques to be used as a stimulus for teaching reading, composition, and conversation. He enjoys translating Chinese into English, has published several of his translations in Chinese journals, and is coauthor of two English textbooks for science students.

of the number 5,993 is the English word EGGS; therefore, the teacher might introduce the following puzzle for the student to attack: "Mr. Jones is a grocer. He bought 5,000 eggs from a farmer, and 993 eggs from the countryside yesterday. How many eggs has Mr. Jones bought all together?" This method can serve as a springboard for many class activities.

The expansion of an arithmetic expression into a puzzle mitigates the problem of there being only a limited number of words available on the calculator. This method is flexible enough to allow the teacher to choose from a large variety of vocabulary items or grammar patterns so as to review, reinforce, or expand on language points. If carefully designed, the numbers or arithmetic expressions and their upside-down reading can be complementary, providing great interest and fun in the classroom.

For group activity

The most interesting aspect of the CALL technique is that it can help the teacher design group activities. As mentioned above, all the numbers except 6 can be used to spell words, but only one word appears each time on a single calculator. If three or more calculators are used in a group of three or more students, some interesting group activities can be conducted in the classroom. For example, the three numbers 808, 51, and 771 can be read to three students respectively, who are then asked to display their numbers on their respective calculators, turn their calculators upside down, and place them close together. The upside-down reading of the three numbers will form the following sentence: BOB IS ILL. For advanced students the three numbers can be expanded into three separate arithmetic puzzles of the type described above. Each student in a group of three is responsible for solving one of the three puzzles dictated by the teacher.

The activity need not stop here. Questions about the calculator sentence BOB IS ILL can provide a springboard for communication. For example, "Why was Bob ill? Is he better now? Will he come to school tomorrow?" If the questions are tailored to a special student's circumstances, the communication will be more personal.

Of course, we can't expect too much from the CALL technique in language acquisition. However, my experience has shown that it does provide an effective and fascinating medium for bringing life to the EFL classroom.

APPENDIX

be	beg	bell	belle
bib	Bible	biggish	bile
bilge	bill	bios	blab
bless	bliss	bob	bobbish
bobble	bog	boggle	boil
bole	boll	boo	boob
boohoo	booze	boss	ebb
eel	egg	ego	eh
Elbe	ell	else	esse
go	google	goose	geese
gee	gel	gesso	ghee
gib	gig	giggle	gigolo
gill	gillie	glib	globe
gloss	gob	gobble	Gobi
goggle	gosh	heil	he
hello	hell	hi	hellish
Helios	Hesse	hie	high
hill	his	hiss	hob
hobble	hobo	hog	hole
ill	illegible	is	Isis
isle	isogloss	laze	lee
lees	leg	legible	lei
less	leo	lessee	lib
libel	libelee	lie	liege
lit	lobe	lob	loess
log	loge	logo	loll
loose	lose	loss	oil
obi	oblige	ogee	ogle
oh	Ohio	oho	ooze
see	seize	she	shell
shill	shoe	shoo	sib
sigh	silo	size	sizzle
slob	sloe	slog	slosh
slot	sloth	so	sob
soil	sole	solo	SOS
so-so	zoo		

■

POLAND

A Grammar Story

KRZYSZTOF POLOK
Academy of Physical Education, Katowice

My grandfather was a very wise man whose life was spent among books. He didn't talk much, but when he said something it was a sentence in which all his wisdom and knowledge appeared. Some of his expressions became proverbial in my family and are repeated even now. There is one that I particularly like. My grandfather used to say that everything depended on one's point of view. Sometimes he added that we were like ships sailing across the ocean of eternity.

One winter evening the idea came to me that some of my grandfather's thoughts could find their realization in English grammar. As I pondered this idea I suddenly realized that there was a way in which my grandfather could help my poor students of English to a better understanding of English tenses. This is what came to mind:

1. Language is a tool that helps people communicate. It enables them to express their thoughts, opinions, feelings, and points of view. Yes, points of view. People always have a point of view. If they want to express an opinion, it must start from their point of view.

2. This point of view is transmitted to the listeners along with the speaker's opinion. In fact, the opinion—the sentence uttered by our speaker—is welded to his point of view. Thus the listeners are oriented to the standpoint from which the opinion has been uttered. So each sentence must contain not only information, but also the point of view from which the information comes forth.

3. Our speaker may want to state a simple fact. He may want to inform his listeners that he usually gets up at noon, or that he doesn't receive *English Teaching Forum* regularly. These are facts—pure, computer-like pieces of information that happened in the past, are real now, and may occur in the future if nothing is done to change them. The speaker is not involved in them emotionally; he only states them. This process of stating facts must be done from a certain point of view. As they are in this case simple facts, we may call it a SIMPLE point of view.

4. Now consider a slightly different situation: the speaker is personally involved in the action he is talking about. In this situation he cannot just state a simple fact, because he either doesn't know the end of the action or he didn't know it when he or his friends were taking part in it. It is comparatively easy to see that the action the speaker is talking about is not finished; it is in progress. Thus, this can be called a PROGRESSIVE point of view.

5. Yet another situation is that in which the speaker may not be interested in the action itself but in the *effects* of the action. He is not going to speak about the facts, but about their effects: how they influence reality around him. Thus, the owner of the house in which a party was given may use that point of view in talking about the results of the party—broken glasses, empty bottles, hundreds of dirty plates, etc. A girl who has just met the boy of her dreams may share her happiness with her girlfriend, using that same point of view. As the effects of the situation the speaker wants his listeners to be interested in are more important to him than the situation itself, we may call that a PERFECT point of view.

This attitude is, indeed, perfect, for it links

Krzysztof Polok teaches English at the Academy of Physical Education in Katowice to coaches, athletes, and physical education teachers. He is a graduate of the Jagiellonian University and author of a handbook for students of English entitled *Inventive English*. He is now collecting material for his doctoral dissertation on the acquisition of English among athletes and the function of inventiveness.

the information about the fact with its possible effects on the environment surrounding it.

6. The speaker's point of view may be modified a bit: he may not only inform his listeners about the effects of the action, but may also turn their attention to the fact that the action he is talking about just now is (was) not yet finished. Thus, his utterance may also contain the element of *continuity*. That point of view may be called PERFECT PROGRESSIVE. When the speaker expresses this attitude, the attention of his listeners is directed both to the fact that the action may have had some effect on the surrounding environment and that it is still in progress.

Having found these four points of view, I went on to the second of my grandfather's thoughts mentioned above: that people are like ships sailing across the ocean of eternity. It seemed to me that this thought should be completed—that is, it should be added that we are always going from the past we have experienced toward the future we don't know. If that thought is planted in the soil of the English language, a very interesting thing occurs. We can see that people can either talk about their present life, make plans for the future, or talk about their past. In that way "the ocean of eternity" can be divided into three parts: the *past*, the *present*, and the *future*.

1. The PAST deals with all actions that happened before a movable point marked on the time line as "now." People referring to that time sector speak from the basis of memory.

2. The PRESENT time sector contains all those actions that happen within the limits of "now." The speaker uses this sector to talk about actions that he is aware of or experiences in his present (i.e., "now") life.

3. The FUTURE time sector is used for actions that will happen in the future. Imagination plays the most important part in this time sector.

Drawing on these two considerations —point of view and time—we can devise a table similar to table I.

The table is formed by combining the time sectors (PAST, PRESENT, and FUTURE) with the four points of view of our speaker (SIMPLE, PROGRESSIVE, PERFECT, and PERFECT PROGRESSIVE). It can serve as a guide through the maze of English tenses, especially after it has been filled in.

A student who puts into it all the most important factors about the tenses not only can discover the characteristics of each of the English tenses, but also has a basis for understanding that crucial element of the language. He is thus able to discover and retain some truths that are not always easy to remember, particularly the following:

1. The elements of the English tenses change according to the time and the speaker's point of view.

2. The speaker's point of view must be marked as well as the time sector.

3. The elements of each of the English tenses depend, first, on the speaker's point of view and, second, on the time group.

4. All the elements of each of the tenses are used to help the speaker describe the situation (fact) or action he wants to speak about.

Looking for the elements of each of the English tenses, a student can discover that:

1. There are certain modal verbs that serve as operators in each of the three time sectors.

2. The modal verbs belonging to each of the time sectors change according to the speaker's point of view.

3. There are certain *stable* elements in each of the four points-of-view-of-the-speaker groups.

4. The stable elements in each of the point-of-view groups help the speaker express his meaning as fully as possible and help his listeners to understand him.

5. All the stable elements should be preserved, not only in the active but also in the passive voice.

6. Interrogative and negative sentences are formed according to a certain pattern.

7. The modal verbs in each of the tenses play an important part in forming interrogative and negative sentences.

As I said above, a student should fill in the table progressively after each of the tenses is dealt with. It should be stressed, however, that the teacher should keep an eye on this work and correct the student if necessary. It is important that only those elements that are really valid for each of the tenses be put into the table. The purpose of this table is to help the student, and it may not do this if it is overloaded with unimportant pieces of information. A well-filled table would look something like table II.

Such a table can not only help the student when he has forgotten something he needs to know about the English tenses; it can also

TABLE I

Time Group / Point of View	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
SIMPLE			
PROGRESSIVE			
PERFECT			
PERFECT PROGRESSIVE			

TABLE II

Time Group / Point of View	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
SIMPLE	V + *-ed* did + V	V + -s do(-es) + V	will/shall + V
PROGRESSIVE	was/were + V + *-ing*	am/are/is + V + *-ing*	will/shall + be + V + *-ing*
PERFECT	had + past part.	have/has + past part.	will/shall + have + past part.
PERFECT PROGRESSIVE	had + been + pres. part.	have/has + been + pres. part.	will/shall + have + been + pres. part.

TABLE III

Time Group / Point of View	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
SIMPLE	He *studied* French yesterday. *Did* he *study* French yesterday? He *didn't study* French yesterday.	He *studies* French sometimes. *Does* he *study* French sometimes? He *doesn't study* French at any time.	He *will study* French tomorrow. *Will* he *study* French tomorrow? He *won't study* French tomorrow.
PROGRESSIVE	He *was studying* French yesterday at five o'clock. *Was* he *studying* French yesterday at five o'clock? He *wasn't studying* French yesterday at five o'clock.	He *is studying* French now. *Is* he *studying* French now? He *isn't studying* French now.	He *will be studying* French tomorrow at five o'clock. *Will* he *be studying* French tomorrow at five o'clock? He *won't be studying* French tomorrow at five o'clock.
PERFECT	He *had studied* French before I came. *Had* he *studied* French before I came? He *hadn't studied* French before I came.	He *has studied* French today. *Has* he *studied* French today? He *hasn't studied* French yet.	He *will have studied* French by next Friday. *Will* he *have studied* French by next Friday? He *won't have studied* French by next Friday.
PERFECT PROGRESSIVE	He *had been studying* French all the time before I came. *Had* he *been studying* French all the time before I came? He *hadn't been studying* French all the time before I came.	He *has been studying* French since five o'clock. *Has* he *been studying* French since five o'clock? He *hasn't been studying* French since five o'clock.	He *will have been studying* French for ten years. *Will* he *have been studying* French for ten years? He *won't have been studying* French for ten years.

serve as teaching material. I have used the table not only to teach the passive voice, but I have even used it to explain some problems of indirect speech—and it worked! The historical past (i.e., the moment an expression has been uttered together with its relation to "now"), in particular, can be easily explained with the table.

Another grammatical problem, the forms of the English tenses (i.e., the elements they consist of), their visual realization, and their connection with the semantic meaning of a sentence, can be easily taught to students by using the table. In this case the table should be filled in differently: instead of writing in the most important elements each of the tenses consists of, a sentence must be inserted. The elements of which the tenses consist should be well marked, so that the students can see how each of the tenses functions in a sentence. Adverbials of time should be added. Negative and interrogative sentences should be placed alongside. Such a table might look like table III.

It appears, then, that a table such as I have described has many benefits. It helps students to:

- realize the importance of English tenses in human communication;
- be aware of the way each of the tenses functions in a sentence;
- learn which elements of a tense are stable and which ones change;
- find out why some of the elements change;
- see what elements each of the English tenses consists of;
- and, last but not least, it helps them to learn these things.

And so my grandfather's thoughts live on. They are helping my students learn English, and this shows that nothing need be lost in the "ocean of eternity." ■

SAUDI ARABIA

Helping Slow and Unmotivated Teenagers Learn English

HUGH MITCHELL
King Saud University, Riyadh

Teenage students with learning difficulties and/or low levels of motivation now form a significant part of the workload of teachers of English within the state systems of non-English-speaking countries. There are two reasons for this. First, English is increasingly perceived as an important factor contributing to success in many fields, and it is therefore offered on a much wider basis than a few years ago, when it was largely the preserve of the "high flyers." Second, as a result of the international recession, young people who would normally have left school and taken jobs are either being kept in the schools or sent to further education institutions for an extra year or two, in an attempt to boost their skills to a more marketable level (or merely to keep them off the unemployment statistics). They are likely to be offered a broad-based curriculum including at least one foreign language, which is frequently English. Conventional approaches to language teaching are unlikely to yield results with these students, but I submit that it is possible to make considerable progress with them if some thought is given to the construction of a suitable approach.

A "problem" situation

I became acquainted with these students during my time in a West German further-education school (Berufsbildende Schule). There, I spent part of my time teaching BVJ groups. This stands for *Berufsvorbereitungsjahr*, meaning (approximately) vocational-preparation year. Typically, these groups contained a wide spectrum of students, ranging from comparatively well-adjusted slow learners to comparatively able students with low motivation and a tendency to be socially disruptive. Between these two extremes lay those students for whom learning problems and motivational problems interrelated in complex and unpredictable ways. A sizeable minority in each group were not native German speakers, and some had had only a minimal amount of education in Germany prior to joining the BVJ class. Some hailed from countries that were culturally very different from the host country. Psychological testing revealed that almost all the students suffered from high levels of anxiety in the school situa-

tion, leading either to aggression or to passivity—both unproductive mental states.

With such a heterogeneous mixture in each class, it was important to seek an approach that would have relevance to all students. Although very different from one another, they were all joined by two common bonds: they were overanxious and they perceived themselves as failures in the educational situation. This was important when it came to designing suitable materials—an essential part of the teacher's strategy, since conventional textbooks assumed a relatively high level of student motivation and were constructed on the basis of a gradient of difficulty that left the majority of students "at the post."

Finding appropriate tasks

Bearing in mind what has been said about unproductive levels of anxiety, the first priority was to put students at their ease. This could be done by presenting them with practical tasks and activities that (*a*) absorbed them and (*b*) removed the fear that they would be called upon to do things that were beyond them. What these tasks were would depend on the composition of the particular group, but it was not felt to be vitally important at the outset that they should contain a large English-teaching element, as long as the objective of putting the students at ease was achieved. I was surprised, for instance, when a group of 16- and 17-year-olds asked if they could *color in* a black-and-white picture I had given them as a handout. I was interested to find, however, that allowing them to do so created an atmosphere of contented, relaxed activity in which it was possible to introduce vocabulary work on the names of the colors and simple patterns connected with the subject matter of the picture. Thereafter, coloring became a regular part of our classroom activities.

Following on from the above example, I should point out that I found it to be inappropriate to attempt to plan a course in terms of the conventional general and specific learning objectives. The vital thing was to create a constructive, stress-free environment in which the teacher had to be prepared to capitalize on and exploit any language-teaching opportunities that might arise. This does not argue for a lack of preparation but rather for *flexibility* of preparation, which involves having a variety of activities and developments ready at all times.

Sample activities

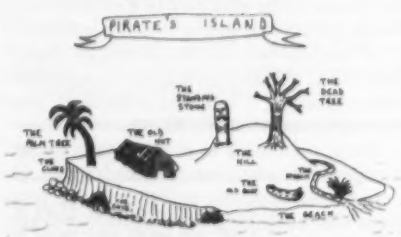
At the end of this article I shall give examples of the types of activity that may prove useful with the students about whom I have been talking. I should point out that there is a great deal of scope for whole-class activities such as mime games and guessing games, but that these can overstimulate some groups and can sometimes leave weaker class members feeling exposed and bewildered. They should therefore be treated with caution. The examples that follow involve individual activity (deciphering a coded message, making a practice clock), which can lead into pair-work or whole-class activities if the situation in the classroom seems favorable. "Pirate's Island" could lead on to a guessing game in which a chosen member of the class hides the treasure in a new location (e.g., under the old boat, inside the cave) and the rest of the class makes guesses as to where it is. "What's the Time?" could lead on to a variety of activities involving the concept of time (e.g., question-and-answer work on what time people perform different activities). The instructions that form a part of each example are, of necessity, relatively complex, and the teacher would need to decide how much help class members would require in order to understand what is expected of them.

In conclusion, I should like to express the hope that the flexible, activity-based approach suggested in this article will help teachers to derive a satisfying teaching experience from groups that would conventionally be dismissed as problem classes.

Prior to beginning TEFL studies at the Centre for Applied Language Studies of Reading University, England, in 1985, **Hugh Mitchell** taught EFL in the Centre for European Languages and Translation of King Saud University in Saudi Arabia. He has also taught in West Germany and Libya. Mr. Mitchell has a B.A. in English from the University of Leeds, a bachelor of philosophy in education from the University of Hull, and a graduate certificate in education from Huddersfield College of Education.

*

PIRATE'S ISLAND



An old pirate lived on an island in the middle of the sea. Everybody knew that he had hidden a box of treasure somewhere on the island, but nobody knew exactly where it was. Just before he died, he left a message saying where the box was hidden. He wrote the message in the form of a puzzle, so that the first person who found the answer could have the treasure.

He only wrote the first letter of each word, together with a space for every other letter of the word. Here is the message:

L _ _ _ I _ _ _ _ _ T _ _ H _ _ _ I _ T _ _ D _ _ _
T _ _ _ Y _ _ W _ _ _ F _ _ _ T _ _ B _ _ .

The complete words are hidden in the letters below. See if you can find them. The words can run in any direction (even diagonally) but always in a straight line. When you find one, draw a circle around it and write it in the correct place in the message.

Clue: The word "the" appears three times in the message.

L A C F N Y E U K L
O B J I T Y B O X E
O S X N H O L E E M
K A T D O U N R G T
D E I S Q I T W S H
V E Z U I N S I D E
B O A W T H E L D F
T H E D H G V L P R

The picture of "Pirate's Island" should help you to solve the puzzle.

*

WHAT'S THE TIME?

How to make a practice clock

Telling the time is quite easy
if we get plenty of practice.

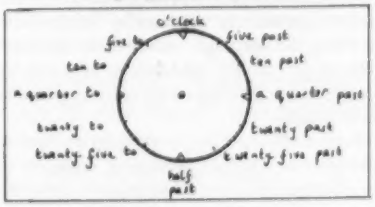


Diagram 1

How to do it

1. Take a big piece of cardboard and draw a *circle* on it. Leave plenty of room at the sides.
2. Now write all the *times* around the sides of the circle (see diagram 1).
3. Make a hole in the center of the circle.
4. Now take some cardboard and cut out a *big hand* and a *little hand*.
5. Make holes in the big hand and the little hand, near the ends (see diagram 2).
6. Color the hands in different colors, to make them easy to see.

Diagram 2

7. Now take a *paper fastener* and push it through the holes in the hands and the center of the circle (see diagram 2).

8. Open the fastener out and you will have a practice clock with hands that really move.

Things to do

1. Work with a partner. Show your partner the time on your clock and see if s/he can tell you correctly what time it is.

2. The teacher, or one of the students, calls out a time (for example "twenty past eleven"). The students set their clocks to the correct time and hold them up, so that the teacher can see who can do it first and who can get it right. ■

Nonnative Speakers Need Not Apply

ADAMU WALELIGN
King Saud University, Riyadh

The average person takes it for granted that there is a one-to-one correlation between being a native speaker of a language and being able to teach that language well. This accounts for the fact that thousands of people have made the transition from "professions" of one kind or another to a career in teaching *their* language. An extension of such a *birthright* mentality is the assumption that a nonnative speaker is necessarily incapable of teaching the language—irrespective of the nature of his or her association with the language, and regardless of the level at which it is to be taught.

Such a situation has developed because the question of whether nonnative speakers can be effective teachers of languages other than their own has been the domain of conventional wisdom rather than the subject of serious professional debate. This has resulted in fundamental decisions being made on subjective and questionable grounds—a situation that has been the bane of many a foreigner aspiring to teach English.

Unfortunately, the situation is not helped by the policies of the major recruiting organizations. Advertisements like "Applicants should be native speakers of English, [British] citizens, and with [a British] educational background" not only effectively discriminate against many nonnative teachers, but also set the tone for other employers. Thus, informed debate needs to be brought to bear on the issue, since, as Strevens (1980:76) points out, "matters of language are liable to attract myths, legends, and old wives' tales, which in turn can lead to social action being taken on totally erroneous grounds."

Adamu Waleligh has taught ESP to pre-medical students at the Centre for European Languages and Translation, King Saud University, since 1980. He taught English at secondary and teacher-training-college levels for three years, and then joined the Ethiopian Ministry of Education as editor of the *English for New Ethiopia* textbooks series, and was also head of the English Curriculum and Textbook Department. In addition to a B.A. degree in English, he holds a postgraduate diploma in TEFL from the University of London Institute of Education (1978) and a master's degree in TEFL and educational technology from the University of Wales (1980).

Popular misconceptions

The rationale behind restricting language teaching to native speakers is the contention that such persons have linguistic as well as communicative competence in the language—an assumption which, on the face of it, has some plausibility. But others would advance the view that, having spent many years at the "receiving end" of foreign-language programs themselves nonnative teachers are in a better position to empathize with the learners' efforts, and that they are far less likely to take the learning process for granted.

Whatever the superficial appeal of such assertions, the danger inherent in them is that they reflect the common misconception of regarding native and nonnative speakers as representatives of two homogeneous speech communities. The evidence, as Chomsky's "ideal native speaker/hearer" indicates, in fact points to the existence of a continuum of competence even among "native speakers": "The homogeneity of the monoglot speech community is never as clear-cut as superficial observation might lead one to assume," says Baetens Beardsmore (1982:31).

This is even more so in the case of nonnative speakers, who come from such a wide variety of backgrounds that they range from those who know only a few words or phrases to those who are completely ambilingual.

The term *native speaker* itself is rather misleading, since it not only refers to a person's mother tongue, but also implies that that person is thoroughly proficient in it. This is an implication that does not always hold true, since it is by no means unusual to find native speakers whose command is quite inadequate; and nonnative speakers who, due to the nature and duration of their exposure to the target language, are completely proficient.

In general, terms like *native* and *nonnative* incorporate so many disparate elements that their accuracy is questionable. English, for example, is a language that hundreds of millions of people claim to speak as their mother tongue—not to mention the hundreds of millions of nonnative speakers. Thus, although a foreigner who has been exposed only to the language of broadcasting, serious drama, or the cinema may be led to think that, for example, all Britons speak Received Pronunciation (R.P.), this assumption has little basis in reality. The point is that one should not only expect diversity and different layers of competence in the language, but should also be more tolerant of such things, and not equate "different" with "inferior."

The elusive standard

Still, the myth of a "golden" or "pure" form of a language persists; and the nonnative speaker's competence tends to be judged against harsh standards—from which even the educated native speaker appears to be exempt (Strevens 1980:63–64). Often, the demands made on the nonnative applicant have little bearing on what is actually required to handle a teaching job properly. A case in point is the inordinate amount of emphasis placed on *the right accent*, and the tendency to look unfavorably on a nonnative speaker's suitability purely on the basis of how his or her "accent" is perceived to deviate from the "standard"—a point that Gimson (1970:83) underscores as follows:

> The English are today particularly sensitive to variations in the pronunciation of their language. The "wrong accent" may still be an impediment to social intercourse or to advancement or entry in certain professions. Such extreme sensitivity is apparently not paralleled in any other country or in other parts of the English world.

The practice of placing undue emphasis on the acquisition of a highly idealized form of the foreign language is at cross-purposes with the limited duration and objectives of most foreign-language-teaching programs—since, rightly or wrongly, current reality dictates that the syllabus concentrate only on those items that have maximum relevance to the specific objectives of each course. Besides, to assume that the teacher—native speaker or otherwise—will produce fluent speakers of the target language in the space of a few semesters is not only to betray a teacher-centered approach to teaching/learning, but also to set oneself unrealistic and unnecessary goals. Even in an ambitious teaching program, with ample time devoted to English, says Brown (1974:54–55), "it is very unlikely that you are hoping to produce speakers of what sounds like native English. You are

most likely to take as your model a very well educated local speaker."

A multi-discipline field

Mastering one's own language is something of an osmotic process, which takes place in a setting that is radically different from the foreign-language-teaching program. Needless to say, operating in a social setting and conducting formal classroom instruction involve two different registers and two very different skills. Furthermore, "knowing" a language cannot be equated with being able to help others acquire the same degree of mastery. The fact is, language teaching calls for the adoption of a systems approach, since it is a task that encompasses linguistic, psychological, and other factors—such as proper classroom management, lesson planning, proper selection of teaching materials and media, the ability to handle a wide variety of learners, and so on.

Furthermore, by definition, a good teacher is a versatile professional who is not only well trained and knows his subject, but is also dedicated, organized, and resourceful, as well as sensitive to and capable of handling the pupils' learning difficulties. As Wilkins (1974:55) points out:

> If the teacher has an inherent sensitivity to other people . . . he will be immediately conscious of their success or failure to learn . . . and, as a result, he will adopt an intuitive flexibility that so often distinguishes the good teacher.

In view of this, to maintain that foreign-language teaching is the prerogative of the native speaker alone is tantamount to suggesting that such a person has a monopoly on all the attributes of a good teacher mentioned above. To date, there has not been any scientific study that has shown that a person is predisposed to be an effective or ineffective teacher purely on the basis of belonging to one category or the other.

More to the point, since the key issue is whether the person is capable of handling the job effectively or not, terms like *native* and *nonnative* should be treated as a rough guide rather than as absolute categories, and employers should be urged to adopt a case-by-case approach to the business of teacher selection. (Ironically, a great many foreign-language teachers are nonnative speakers, since each country endeavors to fill as many vacancies as possible with its own nationals. It is at the more lucrative end—where rapid development has necessitated the recruitment of a large number of second- and third-country nationals—that the nonnative speaker finds him- or herself very much at a disadvantage.)

Double standards

All this is in sharp contrast to the situation in many universities in Europe and America. Here, one routinely finds many non-European languages being taught by Westerners, in capacities that empower these nonnative teachers to award the highest degrees—even to *native speakers* of the languages in question. I am not suggesting that this is not as it should be. Nor am I attempting to cast aspersions on the qualifications of the many eminent scholars involved, for, as Palmer (1908:163) points out:

> The expert phonetician, with little or no lexicological knowledge other than that which comes immediately within his special scope, is more qualified to teach the pronunciation of Russian, Urdu, or Arabic than native teachers of these languages without such expert knowledge. [It is also possible] to learn the ergonic system of a given language from one who is unversed in its phonetics or semantics.

Rather, what I wish to draw attention to is the double standard that is in operation, since, despite the points raised above, there is dogged resistance to the idea of recruiting nonnative speakers to teach English—even when the task at hand is to teach it *to foreigners whose sole objective is to acquire only a functional grasp of the language.*

As matters now stand, a marginally qualified native speaker stands a better chance of securing employment in teaching English as a foreign language than even a well-qualified and experienced nonnative speaker. Furthermore, decisions with far-reaching implications tend to be based on extra-academic considerations. Hence, there is a need for examining the many misconceptions and prejudices that play a detrimental role in influencing language policies today.

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SINGAPORE

It Was Not *What* He Said, It Was the *Way* He Said It

MOHSEN GHADESSY

National University of Singapore

The popular expression "It was not *what* he said, it was the *way* he said it" points to an important ingredient in listening comprehension often neglected in EFL/ESL classes. This, as Brown (1977) says, is because there is no generally accepted framework that can be used to describe the *way* of saying something. As a result, spoken language is often misinterpreted by students because what are usually called the "paralinguistic features" have been poorly perceived.

In his "taxonomy of listening skills" Richards includes the term *paralinguistic* when he writes of the "ability to make use of facial, paralinguistic, and other clues to work out meanings" (Richards 1983:229).

Richards does not say how "paralinguistic clues" should be taught or even tested. However, he points out that a great many listening activities test rather than teach.

Testing perception of paralinguistic features

The purpose of this article is to show how, by using a framework that Brown (1977) has provided, one can test the students' perception of paralinguistic features. To my knowledge such a test is not included in any of the standard tests of English-language proficiency available at present.

There are a number of features associated with spoken language that can be identified by native speakers without necessarily seeing the person who is speaking (e.g., during a telephone conversation). These features include "pitch span, placing in voice range, tempo, loudness, voice setting, articulatory setting, lip setting, direction of pitch, timing and pause" (Brown 1977:149). Associated with all these features is a set of verbs in English that describe how each feature or a combination of features is used in different situations. This is best exemplified when an author wishes to show that a character is speaking in a certain way. The author assumes that his description of the manner in which the character speaks can be interpreted by his readers. For example, only one of the following (no. 3) is "unmarked" with respect to the *way* in which the sentence is said.

1. "Come with me," he shouted angrily.
2. "Come with me," he said, smiling confidently.
3. "Come with me," he said.
4. "Come with me," he ordered.
5. "Come with me," he said invitingly.

Thus, in addition to verbs such as *shouted, ordered,* etc., there are adverbs like *angrily, confidently, invitingly,* etc., that can be used in describing spoken language. The next stage is to devise a test including a number of items uttered differently, and ask the students to interpret the utterances after they listen to the recorded tape. A number of problems may come up at this stage. These include:

1. What type of examples should be used?
2. How should the questions be recorded?
3. How should the answers be evaluated?

Mohsen Ghadessy is a senior lecturer in the Department of English Language and Literature of the National University of Singapore. He has taught basic language and (applied) linguistics courses in the United States, England, and Iran. Dr. Ghadessy received a B.A. in English from Tehran University, an M.A. in linguistics from Indiana University, and a Ph.D. in applied linguistics from the University of Texas at Austin. He has published several articles in *IRAL*, the *English Language Teaching Journal*, and the *English Teaching Forum*.

I will discuss each problem in more detail and suggest a number of solutions that are in no way definitive. Most teachers can develop their own test by using different methods.

What type of examples should be used?

A good source for examples is a book that includes dialogues that are described in terms of paralinguistic features. Short stories, novels, and plays can be used for this purpose. In a test administered to rather advanced students, I used a number of quotations from English novels, given in Brown (1977).[1] A total of 16 examples were chosen, and for each example there were four answers to choose from. The following is one such example:

Question:
"I have been finding things in the forest,"

Answers:
a. said John importantly.
b. he went on breathlessly.
c. he cried almost inarticulately.
d. John lowered his voice.

Eighty-three percent of the students interpreted this question correctly by selecting answer *a*. Of course a question like the one given above may not be suitable for students at a lower level of language competency; however, the same format can be used and simpler examples can be found. One criticism against this type of testing is that there is not much context. This can be partially remedied by providing a mini-dialogue, i.e., someone asking a question and someone answering. The answers can then be categorized in different ways. The following is one such example:

John: "Have you finished your work?"

Mary: "No, not yet,"

a. she said angrily.
b. she said timidly.
c. she said, smiling.
d. she said crisply.

1. A much more detailed discussion of this test is forthcoming in *IRAL*.

I would like to point out that the problem of context cannot be totally solved unless genuine dialogues, secretly recorded, can be included in listening-comprehension tests. In the absence of such texts, the next best thing to do is to look for suitable examples in various books, especially simple modern plays.

How should the questions be recorded?

The answer to this question depends to a great extent on the availability of native speakers of English and whether the general policy is to promote an accent other than the local one. In a situation like Singapore's, both these options can be exercised. However, it is important to record the questions in such a way that they are understood by the majority of students. The argument for how one can find such an accent is beyond the scope of this article.

Assuming that a suitable person is found to utter the questions according to the description(s) given by the author in the book, it is up to the teacher to make sure that the examples are recorded clearly and coherently unless, of course, the purpose is to produce something that is "unclear" or "incoherent."

There should be enough time for students to read the answers after listening to the relevant question and marking their choices—I suggest five to ten seconds for each question. Teachers may want to play back the tape and give students less time to check on their answers.

A related point is whether or not students should be given the written version of what they hear on the tape. It may be an interesting experiment to compare the results of the two tests. My suggestion is that since students are asked to judge *how* something is uttered, they should not be given the written version. However, the fact that the questions are printed may help students to concentrate more on the *way* and not on the *what* before making a choice.

How should the answers be evaluated?

One major difference between this test and other tests used in listening comprehension is that there may not necessarily be a "right" or a "wrong" answer. This creates problems for the final evaluation of students' answers. However, as indicated in the test that I administered to 307 second-year students at the National University of Singapore, there is definitely a "consensus." Indeed, the results of the test indicate a normal spread of correct answers—the range being between 7 and 15 out of 16. The difficulty of evaluating the answers is related to the overlapping of paralinguistic features in spoken language. As an example, something that is uttered "nervously" can be realized, using some technical terms given by Brown (1977), as restricted in pitch span, raised in voice range, rapid, and soft. It is possible to devise the answers in such a way that only one choice can appropriately define the *way* the example was uttered. However, a different evaluating system can be used by having students assign numbers to features to indicate their degree of salience in a particular rendition. The answers can then be evaluated on the basis of the two most salient features.

Conclusions

The relation between paralinguistic features of spoken English and the terms that are used to describe them, i.e., verbs and adverbs, is very complex. I do not want to claim in any way that the test suggested in this article will unravel this complexity. The rationale for such a test is that if paralinguistic features are listed as one set of miniskills to be learned by the students, there should be a way to evaluate them. This article, I hope, is a step in this direction. The result of such a test can be correlated with other tests of English-language proficiency. The same test can be given to a number of native speakers and the results compared.

Finally, as Brown (1977) suggests, paralinguistic features function as "signposts to guide the listener through the structure of an argument." Perception of these features is perception of a speaker's attitude through such an argument. This article has shown one way of measuring this perception.

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TUNISIA

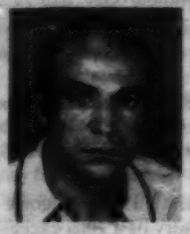
Team Teaching: One Way of Motivating EFL Students

SALAH GUEZGUEZ
Ecole Normale Supérieure de l'Enseignement Technique, Tunis

Our major concern at ENSET (a training school for technical teachers) has always been how to motivate our students in a subject that isn't included in their curriculum though it's of vital importance to them. The only time we can teach them English is at the end of their first year (144 hours during a four-week summer intensive course) and during the second year (one hour a week). But by the time they start to feel the need for English—fourth-year and postgraduate studies—we can't teach them any.

To get out of this dilemma we first thought of teaching one of the major subjects in English. However, we were afraid of frustrating

Salah Guezguez is coordinator of the summer course of Intensive English at Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Ingénieurs. He taught English in secondary schools from 1972 to 1980. Mr. Guezguez received a B.A. in English literature and language from the University of Tunis in 1972.



the students who aren't good at English or who haven't studied any English in secondary school. Therefore, we decided to do it during the summer intensive course (a three-week one this year[1]), and we agreed that the subject would be computer science.

Organization of the course

We formed our group out of the 22 students who got the best score in the placement test. Then we chose two teachers of ESP and two teachers of computer science (two postgraduate students), and we agreed that one pair of teachers would be in class or in the laboratory giving a lesson while the other pair would be preparing the next lesson. This helped us to avoid making mistakes and to change the content and the direction of the course whenever we felt it was necessary.

The course was divided into three periods: The first period was one and a half hours for general English. The second period was one and a half hours for initiation to computer science. The third period was two hours for manipulating the computer. The content of this period changed from one week to another according to the students' progress.

First week: The students were introduced to the technique of using the computer—keys, different parts, function, basic language, etc. They did ready-made exercises about the preceding lessons: reading comprehension, structure, vocabulary, syntax. These exercises were prepared by the two members of the team who weren't teaching.

Second week: The students were initiated to programming their own exercises either about the preceding courses or about scientific points.

Third week: This was the most important week. We gave each pair of students a project that consisted of programming either a linguistic or a scientific point. Six groups chose English grammar points: the passive voice, reported speech, question tags, comparatives, making predictions, and testing. Four groups chose to program scientific points: second-order differential equation, solution of the matricial equation $Ax = B$, Thevenin Diagram, and second-order equation $f(x) = ax^2 + bx + c$. One group programmed the game "Master Mind." At this stage both the dean of the school and the director of studies, who are specialists in mechanics and physics, were of great help on the math and physics points.

Results of the course

The first positive results came from the teachers. The language teachers were highly motivated because they were discovering a mysterious new field and a new way of communicating. The computer-science teachers started reviewing their knowledge of English and working hard to improve their aural skills. The students' motivation was even higher: we didn't see any absenteeism during the three weeks, in spite of the heat and the temptation of the beach. The students first wanted to have access to the lab during the afternoons, and then they asked for extra periods in the evening. During the third week they would stay in the lab until midnight and be in time for the morning course at seven. The software they developed is a set of masterpieces (definitions, exercises, exceptions) which is now being used by other students in the English club.

Evaluation

We held a meeting each Saturday to evaluate the work accomplished during the week and to suggest whatever improvement we thought was necessary. Besides the assistant coordinator, the four teachers in charge of the course, and myself, all the teachers of the intensive course (ten in number) plus Professor Annabi, the dean of the school, and Professor Ksouri, the director of studies, attended the meetings. We also invited many guests who were specialists in ESP or computer science or pedagogy to attend courses and make comments during the meetings.

An evaluation questionnaire consisting of five questions and ten sub-questions was distributed to the students.

The answers reflect the emphasis that was put on the computer and its manipulations. Hence the poor improvement in listening (13/22), reading (12/22), speaking (9/22), and writing (5/22). I think that both the teachers and the students were attracted by the mystery of the computer and neglected the communicative part of the course. Though 12 students out of 22 think more time should be devoted to the lab, which is an illustration of the negative effect of the computer, I think that we should emphasize much more the basic language skills: reading, listening, writing, speaking. The computer should be a pedagogical support and a source of motivation but not a hindrance to communication.

The teachers are aware of this negative aspect, and they suggest five weeks for the course, in order to produce more consistent results and a more objective evaluation.

Conclusion

The success of this experiment is a proof that technology and arts aren't enemies. On the contrary, a combination of both can produce miracles provided you find teachers who are ready to cooperate and to help one another for the benefit of the students. In this way the students get rid of the specialization complex and become convinced that all subjects form a whole and that each can complement the others instead of competing with them. On the academic side we are thinking of teaching other technical and scientific subjects in English, and we can even combine three subjects: English, computer science, and another subject, for example. ■

1. The fourth week contained four religious and national holidays.

UNITED STATES

The Visual Voices of Nonverbal Films

SALVATORE J. PARLATO

Montgomery County (Maryland) Adult Refugee ESL Program

There they were—my first ESL class: Kimleng, Shawali, Diep, Sita, Cheuth, and 15 other refugee adults. All of them were intelligent; each of them was motivated; every one of them eager to master the mysteries of the English language. How to reach them? By borrowing. I borrowed a technique from the education of the deaf: nonverbal films. You may want to try that resource, too, especially since nonverbals originated in international usage and are still the most globally accessible of all motion media.

But even now I can almost hear a question forming in your mind and on your lips: "How can a film WITHOUT words help me to TEACH words?" The answer, briefly, is: "By providing the stimuli for language that viewers themselves can generate." This flexibility of form and content frees you and your class from the vocabulary limitations (upper OR lower) built into most films.

Accepting the validity of my premise for now, let's next define what we mean by nonverbal films. Aren't they just silent movies? No, they're not. Unlike nickelodeon flicks,[1] nonverbals do have soundtracks. But, rather than spewing out streams of data-packed dialogue (typical of most educational films), nonverbals use their soundtracks to provide more than a rat-tat-tat of words-words-words. Instead, nonverbal films give you sound *as* sound: the rustle of branches, the grinding of machinery, animal calls, mood music, or even snatches of conversation—ambient audio re-

1. EDITOR'S NOTE: A *nickelodeon* was an early movie theater in the United States, to which admission was usually five cents (a "nickel"). *Flick* (short for *flicker*) was an early (1920s) slang word for "movie." Hence, *nickelodeon flicks* were early movies without sound tracks.

lated to the story line. Outside of that minimal aural aid, there's really no soundtrack to intrude. What a relief from those all-knowing, all-telling, all-hidden narrators who act as needless interpreters (or "interrupters") of information you can see for yourself on the screen. Nonverbal films let the images themselves tell the story. Wasn't that the idea behind motion pictures in the first place?

By this time, you may have another question: "Aren't these speech-less films meant for hearing-impaired people?" The answer again is no. Ironically, films without words, though useful with deaf learners, are designed for hearing people. You may have seen the prototype of them all, namely *The Red Balloon*. This international favorite is a photographic fantasy about a Parisian boy whose inflatable toy becomes not just a companion but truly a friend in his time of need against a bunch of after-school bullies. Produced in France almost 30 years ago, *Red Balloon* proves three major points about good picture stories: (1) they know few cultural boundaries; (2) they don't show their age; and (3) they appeal to almost every maturity level.

"Well and good," you might be saying by now, "but how can I use a film like that with *my* adults?" The answer is: "Twice!" Your first showing would be strictly introductory. Keep that part of your unit unstructured. Let the story line create its own impact. Let the magic of photography take your class out of their everyday lives and into a new experience that everybody (including you) can share—simultaneously and equally. Then discuss the film. From this follow-up, you'll gain a sense of how many of your students understood the story line. You'll also be able to judge how much language your class can generate in describing the film action. To get discussion started, don't ask general questions like "Well, did you all enjoy the film?" or "Did you understand everything all right?" Instead, ask pointed questions—questions that call for responses that are individual and specific. For example, ask: "Where did this story happen? In the U.S.? In England? In France? *How do you know?*" Or ask: "When did this story take place? This year? A few years ago? Fifty years ago? A hundred? *How do you know?*" And also: "How old was the boy? Was he happy? What was his problem? *How do you know?*"

Then, your schedule permitting (luxury of luxuries!), show the film again. This time, though, call out those same questions *during* key scenes. Encourage something that is normally taboo while watching a movie: talking. That's one way nonverbals can liberate you from the tyranny of somebody else's narration, allowing you—and your students—to provide your own commentary. And you can bring in this "soundtrack" of your own at any point, with any level of vocabulary, and in whatever complexity seems best for your students. For a change, *they* control the choice of words and *they* control the rate.

Salvatore Parlato teaches ESL to adult refugees for the Montgomery County (Maryland) schools. He has been involved in education of the hearing-impaired at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, the U.S. Department of Education, and the World Health Organization. He holds a master's degree from Syracuse University and a bachelor's degree from Holy Cross College in Massachusetts. He has written three video-film reference books and has two other works in progress, both relating to English literacy for language-limited learners.

Still another "may" question pops up: "Can't I just use Charlie Chaplins, Buster Keatons, and Laurel-and-Hardys[2] the same way?" Of course you can, and many EFL/ESL teachers do. Those silent gems are often useful. But they do contain cultural limitations that may hamper the universality of concept you're after. Besides, there are literally hundreds of other *Red Balloon*-type of nonverbals that are just as valid and just as versatile. In fact, a 1973 reference book (Parlato, *Films—Too Good for Words*, New York: Bowker) identifies 1000 of them. And in the last 12 years, at least another thousand nonverbals have been released. But, since you have to start somewhere, start with *Red Balloon* (34 min., color, 1956). Or choose from the mixture of "classics" below. The summaries are admittedly minimal but factual enough to serve as your "shopping list" when checking out your 16mm film sources. Fortunately for your purposes, 16mm is still the worldwide favorite format. Even more to the point, nonverbal productions show up in the most far-flung of film libraries. But—a word of warning—nonverbals aren't always catalogued that way, so you may have to do some digging to identify them. For "starters," though, here are 16 for you to look for:

Ah . . . We Humans (11 min., 1980, West Germany/Benchmark Films). Animated satire on the universal foibles of humanity.

Blue Dashiki (14 min., 1969, United States/Encyclopaedia Britannica). Inner-city boy succeeds in working to buy a prized African robe.

Boarded Window (17 1/2 min., 1974, United States/Perspective). Ambrose Bierce's frontier horror story, with (Caution!) a grisly scene or two.

Cosmic Zoom (8 min., 1968, Canada/McGraw-Hill). Animated trip to inner and outer space: the body and the universe.

David (10 min., 1977, United States/Phoenix). Dramatizes the true story of a police error that kills a deaf youth.

Fable (18 1/2 min., 1972, United States/Xerox Guidance Associates). Marcel Marceau's pantomime of fences that become a self-made prison.

Joseph Schultz (13 min., 1973, Yugoslavia/Wombat). True story of a Nazi executed for refusing to kill civilians.

La Vita (7 min., 1967, Italy/Films Inc.). The occasional bright spots within Western industrialized life (animated).

Neighbors (8 min., 1952, Canada/National Film Board). The ugly results of a backyard dispute over—of all things—a flower.

Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge (27 min., B&W, 1962, France/Films Inc.). Bierce's story of the pre-death fantasies of a Civil War spy.

Piñata (24 min., 1976, Mar/Chuck). Live-action story about a Mexican boy's faith and perseverance. Made in the United States.

Solo (14 min., 1971, United States/Pyramid). The sense of achievement and danger in mountain-climbing alone.

Teamwork (12 min., 1980, FilmFair). Folktale, in animation, showing the importance of cooperation. Made in the People's Republic of China.

Walking (5 min., 1970, Canada/Learning Corp.). Animated art interprets differences we display when on foot.

Whazzat? (10 min., 1975, Hungary/Encyclopaedia Britannica). An animated version of the East Indian fable of six blind men describing an elephant.

White Throat (10 min., 1965, Canada/AV Explorations). This special sparrow's forest home in Algonquin Park, Ontario.

Notice anything about these choices? They're not very new. But don't let the copyright dates fool you. These titles are tried, tested, and true. Their content and their creativity keep them as valid as on the day of their release. But if vintage is important to you, you'll find all the newness you'll ever want, from the late 1970s right up to today. In that "now" category is an ESL series (nonverbal, naturally) you ought to know about. It's the Jeffrey Norton *Speak Easy* program. This BBC videotape consists of 14 short (3–4 minutes) no-dialogue sketches. They deal with everyday British middle-class life. Contents include greetings, a cab ride, the airport, the library, a flat tire, phone calls, and other concepts totaling ten basic language functions in action. No, I haven't previewed this production myself, but, based on its credentials, it seems to meet most of the criteria demanded

2. EDITOR'S NOTE: Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, and (Stan) Laurel and (Oliver) Hardy were comedians in silent movies. *Charlie Chaplins*, then, means movies in which Charlie Chaplin starred.

of EFL/ESL-suitable media. Adding to this tape's usefulness are its teacher's manual, student text, and audio drills. One other note: *Speak Easy* is on videocassette only, and not on film at this time.

"What strange creatures we are," wrote the mother of a deaf child, "who think nothing is real if there isn't a word for it." That thought could explain the natural inhibition you and I may feel about using an alingual medium. But then again, you may adhere to E. F. Schumacher's claim that "Less is actually more." Whatever theory gives you the most comfort, you'll find a wealth of paradoxically word-free/word-inducing wonders awaiting you and your own English-seeking/near-English-speaking Kimleng, Shawali, Diep, Sita, and Cheuth! ■

Building Vocabulary through Exercises in Context

ALBERT E. WILHELM
Tennessee Technological University

A few years ago I taught in the English Institute at Marie Curie Sklodowska University in Lublin, Poland. Even though I regarded myself as an experienced teacher of English to native speakers, I had had little training or experience in TEFL. In this new environment I soon discovered that many of my typical teaching tasks had been oddly inverted. For example, in a classroom in the United States I might frequently have been compelled to explain the meanings of long Latinate words. In Poland, however, my students had usually learned at least two modern European languages before they began to study English. As a result, their knowledge of cognates enabled them to understand many constructions that would have stumped American students, but they were sometimes unfamiliar with the "easy" words common in the speech or writing of native speakers. In reading this paragraph, for example, no doubt they would have been perplexed by my use of the verb *stump*, but I am certain they would not have been stumped by the use of *perplex*. In doing a class exercise one student was unable to understand the common term *pail*, but he had no problems whatsoever with the less common *receptacle*.

Not only were my students puzzled by many everyday English terms, they also suffered from what might be labeled thesaurusitis. Like most students of a second language, they sometimes fell victim to the mistaken notion that words listed as synonyms could be used interchangeably. On a cool, clear morning, for example, one student commented that the weather was certainly "brittle." Even though my lesson plan for the day had focused on other matters, it seemed a good time to explain the exact contexts in which one might use words like *crisp, crunchy,* and *crusty*.

Albert E. Wilhelm is a professor of English at Tennessee Technological University. He received a Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina, and has taught at Morehouse College and Duke University. In 1978 he was a Fulbright Lecturer on American literature at Marie Curie Sklodowska University in Lublin, Poland, and in 1983 he held a similar position at Seoul National University in Korea. He has published several essays on modern American fiction.

Out of experiences such as these I gradually developed some simple exercises to help my students learn new vocabulary and clearly establish the context for proper usage. My first step was to prepare a handout like the one shown here. At the top of the page I wrote the verb *walk* and drew several numbered lines radiating outward. Further down the page I began a list of brief descriptions of possible contexts for walking: (1) like a drunken man, (2) like a well-trained soldier on the parade field, (3) like a hunter after his prey, (4) like a little girl in a meadow. At the beginning of my next class, I asked students to suggest appropriate verbs for each specific situation (e.g., stagger, march, stalk, skip). Then I invited the class to continue my list of descriptions. One student would specify the context while the rest of the class would try to supply a suitable verb choice. When students were not completely able to describe the context they had in mind, I allowed them to supplement their words with pantomime. Such physical involvement certainly enlivened the class and probably helped to reinforce learning.

In the next phase of my exercise, I assigned each student a key word and asked him or her to prepare a handout similar to the one I had given the class. At first I was careful to assign words with rather broad reference, and I tended to concentrate on verbs and adjectives. Verbs such as *talk, eat, take, fight,* and *see* and adjectives such as *big, small, beautiful, friendly,* and *afraid* were choices that produced good results. After the students had completed their handouts, I gave each student a chance to conduct a portion of the class. Rather than discuss all the handouts in one or two class periods, I spread them out over several days. One or two of the vocabulary exercises provided a lively way to begin or end a class while the bulk of the class period could still be devoted to other material in the syllabus.

By varying the terms assigned, an exercise such as this can be used repeatedly, and it permits participation from all members of a class. While it expands vocabulary, it also helps students to discriminate among words with closely related meanings. My particular exercises were geared to university students with some knowledge of Latin and other European languages, but the general procedures could be adapted for students at other levels and from different language backgrounds.

1. Like a drunken man
2. Like a well-trained soldier on the parade field
3. Like a hunter after his prey
4. Like a little girl in a meadow
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

WORLDWIDE

A New International Journal

World Englishes (*WE*), a journal of English as an international and intranational language, began publication in October 1985. The new journal publishes issue-oriented and data-based papers with a theoretical focus on current topics of research in language, literature, and methodology of teaching English as a primary or additional language. There will be three issues a year: a general issue, a thematic issue edited by guest editors, and an issue containing invited state-of-the-art papers on research topics; some issues will be region-specific. According to editors Braj Kachru and Larry Smith, a distinguishing characteristic of *WE* is its consideration of "all the users of English across cultures and languages as equal partners in every aspect of English studies."

The journal is published by Pergamon Press. The annual subscription price (1985) is US$45 for an institution, US$25 for an individual. A free sample copy will be sent on request. Subscriptions and further information are available as follows:

USA, Central and South America: Fairview Park, Elmsford, New York 10523, USA

Australia and New Zealand: P.O. Box 544, Potts Point, NSW 2011 Australia

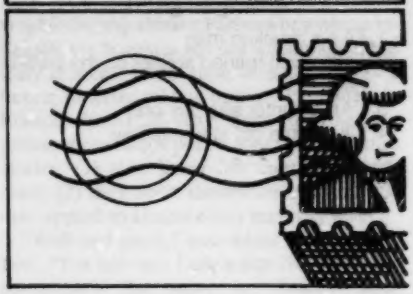
Canada: Suite 104, 150 Consumers Rd., Willowdale, Ontario M2J 1P9, Canada

Germany (BRD) and Austria: Hammerweg 6, D-6242 Kronberg, Germany (BRD)

Japan: 8th Floor, Matsuoka Central Bldg., 1-7-1 Nishishinjuku, Shinjuku-Ku, Tokyo 160, Japan

UK and all other countries: Pergamon Institute of English (Oxford), Headington Hill Hall, Oxford OX3 0BW, UK

Letters



Dymaxion Airocean World Map

Dear Editor:

As can be seen, we did do something with the inspiring Dymaxion Airocean World Map found in the October '84 issue of the *Forum*.

I provided my students (the photo shows a small group of them) with a color copy of the map and set them to work. Not only did they have to construct the icosahedron, but also answer a 16-point questionnaire on the "thing." Although the answers were not exactly world-shattering, the constructions were a delightful success.

Maybe some other student-teacher teams would like to repeat the experience—and do a better job.

All the very best to you and your bright staff.

J. P. PARIGI
Germany

Vocabulary Puzzles

Dear Editor,

I have been teaching English in a secondary school for two years. During this period I have had the opportunity to go through several copies of *Forum*, and I must confess the articles I have read have been of great use to me.

Through some articles that *Forum* carries, readers must have deduced that a teacher is never supposed to give but a set of rules to his pupils. His task is to *show them the way but let them travel alone*. He must teach them how to behave when confronted with an unusual situation—how to think and how to guess. In short, let them work creatively.

But how about large classes? Is a teacher able to accomplish his task properly when in front of more than 44 pupils? I am sure that teachers in most of the developing countries are met with the problem of large classes and do need articles and techniques to improve the effectiveness of their English teaching. *Forum*, help us all.

Before finishing my letter I would like to present a way of "testing vocabulary" I've used with pupils aged 13 to 15. This "testing" is just some crossword puzzles in the form of drawings. They proved to be attractive because pupils found them something like a game—a relaxation, not a test. Unknowingly, my pupils reviewed the lexical items they had learned during the whole school year.

HAMMOUDI ABDELHAK
Algeria

Mr. Abdelhak's puzzles may be found on the "Lighter Side" page.—ED.

The Present Perfect Tense

Dear Madam,

I have been receiving *Forum* for some years (I hope I shall continue to do so) through the American Embassy in Oslo.

I have taught English business correspondence, and your articles have been very interesting and informative. (I trust they will be up to standard in the future also.)

I was somewhat puzzled, however, when I read in Number 3, July 1985, on page 4, editor's note, the following: "*. . . I have lived in Ankara for eight years,* which clearly implies a continuing act *not* 'completed prior to the present' but still going on, in contrast to *I lived in Ankara for eight years,* which does indicate action completed prior to the present."

My point is that it is correct for me to say: "I have lived or I lived in America for five years" (which I did during the war) since I no longer do so. On the other hand, had I stayed on and was still living there, the correct thing to say would have been: "I have been living in America for 45 years."

In business correspondence: "We have sold to that firm for many years," implying that we no longer do so, as distinct from: "We have been selling to . . ." showing hope of continuing these business relations. Am I right or wrong? Is it British English versus American English? Or informal?

AAGOT DØSCHER AMELN
Norway

The Editor Replies

Your query about my note on the present perfect is not easy to answer. My experience, as well as that of colleagues who have taught English as a foreign language for many years, agrees with my comment in the note; that is, that in a sentence including a time period (e.g., *for 12 years, since 1972,* etc.) the present perfect indicates continuity into the present while the simple past indicates lack of such continuity. For example, I would say, "I have lived in Washington for 20 years" because I am still living here, but I would say "I lived (not *have lived*) in Los Angeles for a number of years," because I no longer live there. When a time period is *not* indicated, however, the present perfect "of current relevance" is frequently used: "I have lived in Los Angeles; I have also lived in Manila," etc. Similarly, "I have already seen that movie; I've read that book," etc.

A careful reading of the footnote you referred to shows that Joe Pierce disagrees with my understanding of this usage; he claims to have heard it differently, and frequently so. Without the proper documented research, it is impossible to say which of us is nearer the truth in this instance. It is clear that the important thing is to be open-minded: to avoid the twin pitfalls of, on the one hand, too unquestioning an adherence of an established "rule" of usage, and, on the other, a too-zealous attempt to overthrow an established opinion. I'm sure Mr. Pierce and I agree on this principle; time and research will ultimately answer the question. Time itself, of course, is also a factor in questions of usage (and may or may not be so in this case), since some usage changes over time.

Your examples show that the distinctions that I make by using the simple past and the present perfect tenses are the distinctions that you make by using, respectively, the present perfect and present perfect progressive tenses. As to whether your usage represents British as against American usage I am not qualified to say. At first I was inclined to guess that it might indeed be British usage; however, in checking into Quirk et al.'s *Grammar of Contemporary English*,[1] I find the following (page 91):

> The present perfect indicates a period of time stretching backwards into some earlier time. It is past with "current relevance":

1. Randolph Quirk, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, Jan Svartvik, *A Grammar of Contemporary English* (New York and London: Seminar Press, 1972).

simple past: John *lived* in Paris for ten years
present perfect: John *has lived* in Paris for ten years

The simple past of the first sentence indicates that the period of residence in Paris has come to a close. The perfective aspect here denotes that John still lives there at the moment of speaking (although there is no implication that his residence there will continue). Compare also the following pairs of sentences:

His sister *has been* an invalid all her life (i.e., she is still alive)
His sister *was* an invalid all her life (i.e., she is now dead)

For generations, Nepal *has produced* the world's greatest soldiers (i.e., the nation of Nepal must still exist)
For generations, Sparta *produced* Greece's greatest warriors (i.e., the state of Sparta may no longer exist)

Quirk et al. have further useful things to say about the simple past and the present perfect, but this will suffice for our purposes.

The newest comprehensive grammar that I know of—this one by American authors—is *The Grammar Book*, by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman.[2] They have this to say about the present perfect (page 64):

> [The present perfect] often expresses how the speaker views himself relative to the event(s) he is talking about:
>
> a. A situation that began in the past and that continues into the present:
> I have been a teacher since 1972.
> b. A past experience with current relevance:
> I have already seen that movie.
> c. A very recently completed action:
> Mort has just finished his homework.
> d. An action that went on over time in the past and that is completed with the moment of speech:
> The value of the Johnsons' house has doubled in the last 4 years.

As you can see, these grammarians' views of the present perfect agree with my own. Your experience and Mr. Pierce's comments, however, suggest that other usages may exist. We will be glad to publish in future issues any enlightening communications that may come from readers on this subject.

Teaching Tenses Heuristically

Dear Editor,

I might say *Forum* was my first textbook as a new teacher because I have been receiving it since 1973, when I graduated from the University of Cluj-Napoca. It was of great help to me in my early years of teaching, as it is to me now.

I teach at a secondary school, and I deal with pupils between the ages of 10 and 14 (beginners). I like my job and enjoy working with children.

The ideas given to me by the various articles you publish helped me to have interesting English classes, but they also stirred my imagination. That's why I want to share one such experience I had in teaching tenses by means of the heuristic method. I have been using this method for the last three years and now I can assure any English teacher of its benefits.

This is how it works (for the past tense simple): Each pupil gets a sheet of typewritten paper with questions about and examples of the past tense. Within a given period of time (40 minutes) the pupils have to solve seven items. Each item has a blank space for the pupils to complete. I give them all the necessary information and then they work individually. The directions are: to read item 1 carefully, to solve it—that is, to complete the blank space, and afterwards to check at the bottom of the page to see whether their answer is correct. If it is not, they must correct it and read the item again and again. I strongly emphasize the importance of not passing on to item 2 until they are sure that item 1 is fully understood. Then they have to do the same with the other items.

Thus they can learn the past tense by themselves in short steps.

When I used to teach this tense in the traditional way, I used my own speed for the whole 30 minutes. But children have different rates of understanding. This new method helps each pupil to work at his/her own speed in solving these items and in understanding them. They feel as if they are in a contest and try to understand alone. During the last ten minutes I name pairs of pupils to act as teacher and pupil, so they reinforce their new knowledge by practicing in pairs. The pupils enjoy this kind of teaching and are very proud of their success.

I produced similar sheets for the present perfect tense, the future tense, and their corresponding continuous aspect forms.

If you find that this method shows something new, I would be delighted to have it published in the *Forum*.

SIMONA CHISIU
Romania

PAST TENSE + regular verbs

1. (*a*) I play tennis every Saturday. Yesterday it was Saturday.
   (*b*) I played tennis yesterday.

The verb in sentence (*a*) is in the present tense and the verb in sentence (*b*) is in the past tense. When does the action in sentences (*a*) and (*b*) take place?

(*a*) _____
(*b*) _____

2. What is the mark of the past tense with regular verbs? _____

3. Give the past tense of the following verbs: ask, visit, travel, live, talk, work.

_____
_____
_____

4. Put the right form of the verb in the following sentences:

(*a*) I *visit* my grandmother last Sunday.
(*b*) I *work* hard yesterday morning.
(*c*) I *talk* a lot during the last English lesson.

5. Now, remember the use of the auxiliary verb to *do* in the interrogative and negative sentences. The verb to *do* is an irregular verb. Its past tense form is *did*. Now read carefully:

(*a*) I played tennis yesterday.
(*b*) Did I play tennis yesterday?
(*c*) I did not play tennis yesterday.

6. Now try and complete correctly the following sentences:

(*a*) I *help* father fix the car. Yesterday?
(*b*) _____ father fix the car yesterday?
(*c*) Yes, I did.
(*d*) Peter _____ not _____ father fix the car yesterday.

7. Put each of the following sentences in both interrogative and negative form:

(*a*) Paul watched the English lesson on TV.
(*b*) Father worked all night.
(*c*) We liked the cake.
(*d*) It rained all night.

ANSWERS

1. present, past
2. -ed
3. asked, visited, traveled, lived, talked, worked
4. visited, worked, talked
5. _____
6. helped, did I help, did not help
7. Did Paul watch the English lesson?
   No, he did not.
   Did father work all night?
   No, he did not work all night.
   Did we like the cake?
   No, we did not.
   Did it rain all night?
   No, it did not.

TEACHER CORRESPONDENTS

[*We regret that no more names can be accepted until those on the waiting list have been published. Readers are requested not to write to this column until further notice.*—ED.]

I'm a Chinese teacher of English, age 26. I have been teaching English for more than three years and I'd like to receive suggestions and advice on teaching from other parts of the world. I'd also like to exchange magazines, stamps, and postcards.

YEN WEI
Foreign Languages Department
Southwest China Teachers College
Beibei, Chongking
People's Republic of China

2. Marianne Celce-Murcia and Diane Larsen-Freeman, *The Grammar Book: An ESL/EFL Teacher's Course* (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1983).

I'm a Finnish teacher of English. I'd like to arrange for correspondence between a class of my 16-year-old students and students in some other part of the world. The correspondence might include written and oral (cassettes) communication, both as a group and individually.

Ms. MARJATTA MANNINEN
Juurikoskenk. 6 as. 10
SF-84 100 Ylivieska
Finland

I'm a teacher and would like to be included in the list of teacher correspondents. I'm interested in creating picture books in English.

VESNA BOŠKOVIĆ
32000 Čačak
Kneza Miloša 53/41
Yugoslavia

I have been teaching ESL to teenagers for more than nine years. I would like to correspond with *Forum* readers all over the world.

Mr. MEVLÜT AKGÜL
Lise İngilizce Öğretmeni
Karatas Adana
Turkey

I would like to have my name and address published in your list of teachers.

E. W. WIJETHILAKE
143/1 Dammulla
Karandana
Sri Lanka

We are teachers of English in a secondary school and are interested in corresponding with other teachers around the world.

SALLY ABRAGAN
SUSAN BAHAYNON
FRANCIS MALATAMBAN
ANGIE CUIZON
MARINA SUMALINOG

San Isidro College
High School Department
Malaybalay, Bukidnon 8201
Philippines

I am a new teacher of English. I am 25 years old and enjoy all sports, especially volleyball. I also enjoy traveling and letter writing.

HAOI ABDELHAK
Lotissement Haj Slimane
No. 59 (G3) C.Y.M.
Rabat
Morocco

I have been a teacher of English for two years. I want to correspond with teachers outside my country to learn about new methods of teaching.

ARBI KHELIFA
Post Office El Feidh
Biskra
Algeria

I am an English teacher in South Korea and would like to correspond with teachers from any part of the world. I'm interested in literature and traveling.

Mr. CHANG-SOO, HA
331–121 Jung-Hwa-1-Dong
Dong-Dae-Mun-Gu
Seoul 131
Korea

I am a secondary-school English teacher. My special interest is comparative lexicology, and my hobby is stamp collecting.

BUZDUGAN NECULAI
Str. George Enescu nr. 5
Iasi 6600
Romania

I have been an English teacher since 1979. My interests include traveling, reading, and painting.

SÜMER CAN
Ziya Gökalp Lisesi
İngilizce Öğretmeni
Diyarbakır
Turkey

BOOKS RECEIVED

BLASKY, ANDREW and ELIZABETH CHAFCOULOFF. *Faces*. Exchanging Views in English. San Francisco: Lateral Communications, 1985. 96 pages.

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RINVOLUCRI, MARIO. *Grammar Games*. Cognitive, affective and drama activities for EFL students. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984. vi + 138 pages.

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Enough Is Enough

Four letters cause me disillusion
OUGH makes phonetic confusion.
Four simple letters with four pronunciatio
Make learning English tough for Asians.

OUGH has no logic, no rule
Or rhyme or rhythm; it will fool
All who struggle to master expression;
English may cause thorough depression.

I pour some water in a **trough**
I sneeze and splutter, then I **cough.**
And with a **rough** hewn **bough**
My muddy paddy fields I **plough.**

Loaves of warm bread in a row
Crispy crusts and doughy **dough.**
Now, my final duty to do
And then my chores will all be **through.**

My lament is finished, even **though**
Learning this word game is really slow.
It is so difficult, it's very **rough**
Learning English is really **tough.**

If a **trough** was a truff
And a **plough** was a pluff
If **dough** was duff
And **though** was thuff
If **cough** was cuff
And **through** was thruff
I would not pretend, or try to bluff,
But of OUGH I've had **enough!**

Rosemary

Rosemary Chen is a New Zealand teacher who has lived in Asia for 20 years. She is editor of th publications unit of the Southeast Asian Ministe of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Regional guage Centre in Singapore, a regular reader of the Forum, and writes language materials for us Asia.

ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD PUZZLES

Scorpion puzzle
Down: 2. saying; 9. seeks; 10. repays;
11. mason; 12. over
Across: 1. legs; 2. sister; 3. toy; 4. arm
5. FBI; 6. poison; 7. gloves; 8. seal

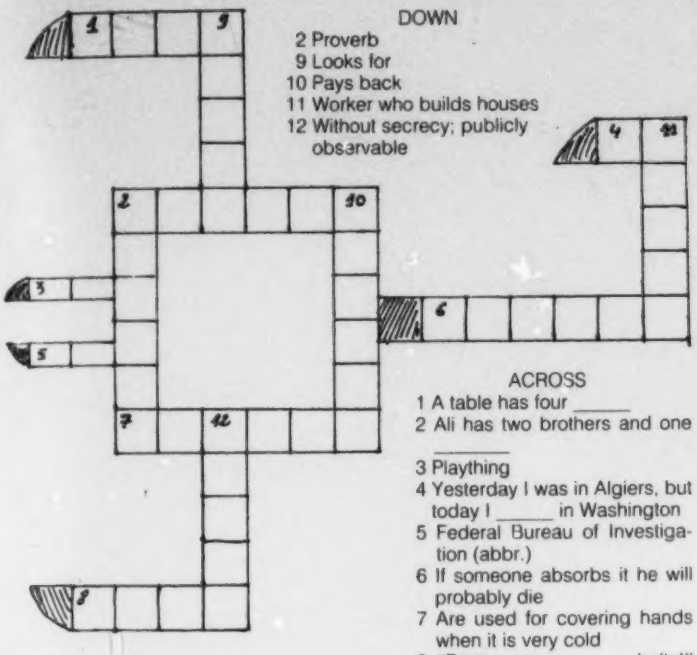
Airplane puzzle
Down: 1. fly; 2. P.O. 3. in; 4. on; 5. to;
6. wing; 7. bomb; 8. of; 9. tail
Across: 2. pilot; 10. on; 11. no; 12. fuel

Lent For 7 Days Only

"The Lighter Side"

Two Crossword Puzzles

(contributed by Hammoudi Abdelhak)



DOWN

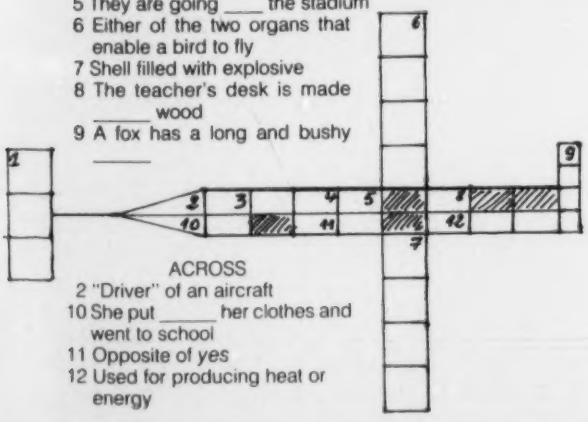
2 Proverb
9 Looks for
10 Pays back
11 Worker who builds houses
12 Without secrecy; publicly observable

ACROSS

1 A table has four _____
2 Ali has two brothers and one _____
3 Plaything
4 Yesterday I was in Algiers, but today I _____ in Washington
5 Federal Bureau of Investigation (abbr.)
6 If someone absorbs it he will probably die
7 Are used for covering hands when it is very cold
8 "Fasten your _____belts!" the air hostess said

DOWN

1 Though hens have wings they cannot _____ high
2 Post Office (abbr.)
3 *Out* is the opposite of _____
4 Opposite of *off*
5 They are going ___ the stadium
6 Either of the two organs that enable a bird to fly
7 Shell filled with explosive
8 The teacher's desk is made _____ wood
9 A fox has a long and bushy _____



ACROSS

2 "Driver" of an aircraft
10 She put _____ her clothes and went to school
11 Opposite of *yes*
12 Used for producing heat or energy

Do You Know These Cities?

(contributed by H. A. Dayananda)

1. _____CITY This first one is very easy.
2. _____CITY This one's full of fighters.
3. _____CITY This one's not to be trusted.
4. _____CITY This one is bold and impudent.
5. _____CITY This one has speed.
6. _____CITY This one will give you light.
7. ____CITY This one doesn't have very much.
8. _____CITY This one has enough room.
9. _____CITY This one gives you a sound judgment.
10. _____CITY This one has an ability to be adapted.
11. _____CITY This one is highly spirited.
12. _____CITY This one holds tightly.
13. _____CITY This one expresses untruthful statements.
14. _____CITY This is an untimely matured one.
15. _____CITY This one has a quality of being universal.
16. _____CITY This one gives to you and takes back.
17. _____CITY This one takes part in criminal acts.
18. _____CITY This one adheres to family life.
19. _____CITY This one tries to be known to everyone.
20. _____CITY This one is utterly selfish.
21. _____CITY This one deals with races.
22. _____CITY This one has a truthfulness.
23. _____CITY Beware! This one treats fiercely.
24. _____CITY A happy one, to end with.

Mr. H. A. Dayananda has been teaching English for 10 years in a secondary school in Sri Lanka. He is a regular Forum reader and would like to correspond with other teachers in the world to exchange ideas and experiences. His address is: NELUM, Akurugoda, Sultanagoda, Sri Lanka.

ANSWERS TO CITIES

1 Simplicity 2 Pugnacity 3. Duplicity 4 Audacity 5. Velocity
6 Electricity 7 Scarcity 8 Capacity 9 Sagacity 10. Elasticity
11 Vivacity 12 Tenacity 13 Mendacity 14. Precocity
15 Catholicity 16 Reciprocity 17 Complicity 18. Domesticity
19 Publicity 20 Egocentricity 21 Ethnicity 22 Veracity
23 Ferocity 24 Felicity

24/3

ENGLISH TEACHING FORUM
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FORUM

Volume XXIV Number 3 July 1986

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DEPOSITORY 376

Writing a composition is similar to shaping a clay pot Develop audiences for your student writers Journal writing Revision is not punishment Summary writing Any piece of writing the student produces should have a purpose Simplicity, conciseness, readability, consistency, and general elegance Instead of waiting until they have learned to write, they write to learn Process approach Good writing involves a constant interplay of thinking, writing, and rewriting Revision can now be a source of amusement Models approach It is fun to write on a word processor Revision, detachment, and serendipitous learning Peer editing Students need to write often Resist the temptation to mark every error Shocks and jolts Other languages may have different concepts of the units of discourse Integrated approach Good paragraphing is a prerequisite for a well-developed and coherent piece of discourse Controlled writing Working on our own or another's text is a creative process Free writing Paraphrasing The ability to compose grammatically correct sentences is not all that is needed to communicate Most students prefer speaking to writing

IA 1.17:

Editorial

At first there were just a few, then a few more. Soon each mail delivery brought at least one or two. That was when we began to suspect that we were witnessing a worldwide ground swell of interest in the teaching of writing. Never had there been such an influx of articles on any one subject. So we decided to put as many as possible together in one issue; thus our "writing" issue was born.

The most obvious characteristic of these articles was their diversity—a diversity that surely reflects the multiplicity of needs and interests, of educational backgrounds and traditions, of approaches and methods and hopes and aims and teaching styles that characterize our worldwide readership. Amidst such diversity the question "Which article is best?" becomes unanswerable without such additional questions as: For whom? In what condition and situation? When? And where? As a consequence we have attempted to include in this issue the broadest possible array of approaches and levels of sophistication, so that as many readers as possible might find something that speaks to their interest. We hope, too, that such a varied compilation may help us all to gain a better sense of the state of English teaching worldwide, at least with respect to this one skill. Seen in this light, the articles tend to complement rather than (as it might otherwise seem) to contradict one another.

Several of the articles reflect the recent interest in *process writing* (as opposed to *product writing*). There is little question that this movement will have some impact on the teaching of writing in a foreign language. It is not yet clear how great that impact will be or just what form it will take. We all know from experience that at advanced levels the teaching of reading and writing in an L_2 becomes more and more like the teaching of reading and writing in L_1, as the students' competence in these skills resembles more and more closely native-speaker competence. Therefore it seems safe to surmise that process writing, which began with and has been developed primarily by teachers of L_1 writing, will find its way rather quickly into advanced L_2 classes. And we shall see some of the traditional emphasis on form, or *product*—attention to topic sentences and rigidly structured paragraphs, imitation of models, "controlled" writing exercises, close attention to correction of grammatical errors, etc.—give place to an increased interest in content and self-expression, journal-type writing, multiple revisions with primary emphasis on communication of meaning rather than on form, peer evaluation, a more personal and less formal kind of teacher input, and so forth.

The obvious cautions for such an approach with regard to the earlier stages of L_2 study, when students have not yet internalized much of the structure or vocabulary of English, hardly need to be delineated. However, just as in recent years the emphasis in many classrooms has shifted to a more communicative approach even at the earlier levels, so it probably will do in this case, as teachers intelligently accept the new while keeping what is needed of a more structured approach.

On a personal note, we would like to add that we are a strong believer in the value of learning to write by jotting down thoughts and then copiously revising and rewriting. And we have found a word processor to be a wonderful aid in doing this, both because it makes editing and rewriting so easy in a mechanical sense, and perhaps even more because this very ease of deletion and change shows the act of writing to be a more fluid, amendable, informal, and creative process than we had previously thought it to be.

—ACN

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Anne Covell Newton
Editor

Mary Jo Ilacqua Boya
Managing Editor

Susan Gail Pollock
Editorial Assistant

Leigh McDaniel
Production Assistant

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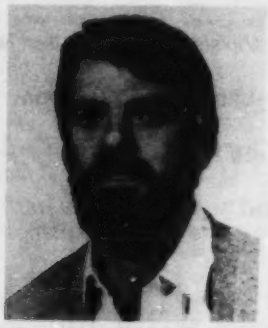
Teaching Composition to Large Classes

DUNCAN DIXON



DUNCAN DIXON is currently completing a Master of Education degree at the University of British Columbia. He has a B.A. in English, history, and religious studies from the University of Manitoba, and a Diploma in Secondary Education from the University of Victoria. He started his teaching career in Zambia, where he worked with the Mennonite Central Committee. He is particularly interested in teaching composition and investigating ways in which it can be done effectively and made less painful for teachers and students.

Thomas Malthus, a 19th-century British economist, predicted that the growth rate of the world's population would outstrip the growth of food production, resulting in worldwide starvation. While the famine Malthus predicted has not come to pass, overpopulation in the ESL/EFL classroom certainly has. Consequently, one of the great challenges facing English teachers is that of teaching written composition to classes that number anywhere from 40 to 60-plus students. Many teachers shoulder the challenge and stagger along under their load of marking, eyes fixed on the freedom the end of term brings; others take refuge in controlled composition, which guides students through the rockier passages of English composition, but which, in so doing, often prevents much meaningful interaction from taking place between the students and their writing. Still others concentrate on sentence-level exercises and grammar drills, apparently with the hope that if enough grammar is poured into their students, some of it will leak out into their compositions.

While most English teachers agree that students need to write often, the problem many teachers face, and one that is overwhelming for those with large classes, is how to respond to the unwieldy numbers of compositions produced each week. The purpose of this article is to examine a number of pedagogically sound ways of teaching composition to large classes of students.

From the outset, the teacher must make it clear to the students that it is physically impossible for the teacher to respond to every piece of writing the students do. If your students doubt this, a few figures on the board multiplying the number of papers you must mark each week by the amount of time it takes to mark each one will soon convince even the most skeptical student of this fact.

The starting point: carefully chosen assignments

Although it is marking that is the most striking aspect of the problem, if we begin by dealing with it we will be dealing with only part of the problem. We need to start at the beginning, with the writing assignments themselves, and work our way through the writing process if we are to deal effectively with the difficulties presented by large numbers of compositions.

When we assign a composition, we should be sure that we have clear in our own mind precisely what it is we will be looking for when we evaluate it, and give this information to our students *before* they begin to write. Too often we give assignments with uncertain objectives in mind and thus are unable to respond in a helpful manner to our students' efforts. Instead, we pick out surface errors and circle them in red in order to justify the mark at the bottom of the paper. This type of marking is time-consuming and accomplishes little else than discouraging both the students, who see nothing but what they have done wrong, and the teacher, who finds

himself or herself marking the same errors on the next composition.

The teacher must consider a number of factors when deciding what type of writing to assign to students. The curriculum and final examination are the first concerns, but once the writing skills required have been determined, the teacher should devise more imaginative ways of presenting the required modes than just reworking the questions on the past 10 years' examination papers.

Develop audiences for your student writers both inside and outside of class: have your students prepare their best work for display on the classroom bulletin board; organize an in-class debate and have your students write a composition supporting one of the sides debated; set up a roleplay in which one class acts as employers seeking employees, and the other class, the applicants; have your classes submit articles to the school newspaper; take topics of current interest from the newspaper, discuss them, and have your students write letters to the editor as responses; talk to instructors in other subject areas in order to discover the types of writing they require of students, and develop assignments that teach your students how to write effectively in that style. For example, get together with a science teacher and examine the language structures, such as conditionals, that the students need in order to record the results of their experiments. Show the students the structures they will need; the science experiment will provide the meaningful context. Mark this piece of writing by looking for the correct use of the conditional only. Students who are writing for real audiences and working on assignments they see as useful will be much more willing to revise and polish their work.

Prewriting activities

Once you have decided on a suitable topic for a composition, it is not enough simply to turn your students loose to generate their material as best they can. Develop prewriting activities in order to enhance the generation of ideas. Hillocks (1982) found that these activities result in greater improvement in compositions than do lengthy teacher comments on the completed composition. Hughey et al. (1983) suggest numerous invention techniques to use with ESL/EFL students.

Have your students brainstorm ideas in groups or as a whole class as a way of generating as many ideas as possible on a topic. Two "scribes" can write on the board the ideas the class generates, and the students can write their own lists of ideas from those suggested by the class.

Give your students a topic and have them "freewrite" as much as they can on that topic without stopping. This gives them practice in writing quickly and extensively in English and allows them to see how much they know about a topic. Because this is an intensive form of writing, it is very tiring and should be used only for short periods of time until the students become familiar with it.

Use discovery techniques such as interviewing staff members as a way to find more information on a subject. Use journalistic questioning techniques—Who? What? When? Where? Why?—to explore a subject. Set up debates to help students clarify both sides of complicated issues. These techniques will help students discover what they know and don't know about a topic, showing them where and how to get information.

Reducing the marking load through journal writing

In order to reduce your marking load, assign writing projects that require little marking. A good example of this type of writing is a journal. The purpose of a journal is to allow students to record their thoughts and ideas in writing, but without having to concentrate on the written form. Foreign-language learners are often so concerned with the surface structure of their writing that they have little time to think of the ideas they are writing about. Journals are a nonthreatening forum in which students can express their ideas with a minimum of concern about structure. Journals also serve as a source of ideas that students can use in later compositions. As students begin to develop the ideas recorded in their journals in later compositions, they will begin to work on smoothing out the grammatical problems.

Initially, your students will need ideas about what to include in their journals. Give them a list of topics that will stimulate them to think as they write and which include the modes of writing (for example, description, narration, exposition) that you wish to cover in more formal writing assignments. Allow them to write the first entries in class, so that you can help them over the problems of what to write. The frequency with which they write must be determined by the teacher, but once a week should be the minimum, with three or four times a week far preferable.

Teacher response to journals is essential, but need not be extensive. Give them an occasional quick reading and respond with encouraging remarks, arguments that reinforce or dispute what they have written, and questions that elicit more information. Another way to encourage them is to select examples of striking ideas in the journals and present them to the class.

Encourage your students to use material from their journals as a source of ideas for their writing. Have them list as many ideas as they can think of on the topic at hand and then choose several ideas as a starting point for writing their compositions.

Peer-group editing

Probably the most effective way to reduce the teacher's marking load is to set up groups in which students

read one another's compositions and make suggestions for revision before the teacher grades them. The teacher is not the only one who gains from this procedure; the students as well receive a number of benefits from participating in peer-group editing. The first value for the students is that their writing is being read by real readers and not just falling under the jaundiced eye of the teacher. The fact that students know that readers other than the teacher will be reading their writing is often enough to stimulate them to re-read and revise what they have written. Second, by using this technique, students learn to become critical readers, not only of others' work, but of their own. As they help fellow students to deal with their writing problems, they become more aware of their own difficulties and the resources available to them to improve their writing.

Introducing peer editing

The teacher can expect at least some resistance from students when introducing the concept of peer editing. The first reaction is usually "But marking is your job; you're the teacher." The second reaction is most often "But we don't know what to look for." Both of these objections are valid, and we must reassure our students that the teacher will indeed be responsible for the final marking and grading of compositions and is not simply trying to avoid his or her duty. We must also realize that we cannot simply divide students into groups, have them read one another's compositions, and expect them to make profoundly helpful observations about them.

We must train the students to become observant readers by modeling editing skills before the whole class and training them to perform similar tasks when faced with their peers' writing. The first response that students make to their peers' writing must always be a reader's response, i.e., directed toward the writer's intended meaning and not toward the surface errors. (Many English teachers need to learn this lesson.)

In many ways, writing a composition is similar to shaping a clay pot. We don't start by putting the glaze on a lump of clay and firing it; rather, we start with a sometimes foggy notion of what we wish to create and continuously reassess our initial vision in terms of what turns out. Sometimes we may destroy what we have started and begin anew, but it is not until we have a shape with which we are happy that we glaze and fire it. So, too, with composition. We should not work on the finishing editorial touches until we have a form that says what we mean and holds the contents we desire.

Consequently, response to errors at this stage should be minimal, because if the piece is rewritten extensively, initial errors may disappear and new ones take their place. Always insist that your students begin peer evaluation on a positive note by having them answer a question such as this: "What do you like best about this composition?"

Directing students' responses to their peers' writing and their own

From that point you may want your students to give general comments on content and suggestions for improvement (Crowhurst 1981). However, with ESL/EFL students, you may wish to give more specific instructions. Belanger and Rodgers (1983) and Hogan (1984) suggest a number of questions students might ask of both their own compositions and those of their peers:

1. *Value*
   a. Is this writing worth revising?
   b. Is it interesting for me? For others?
2. *Purpose*
   a. What is the author's purpose? To describe? To entertain? To narrate? Write down what you feel the purpose is.
   b. Write down the sentence that best tells you what the writer's purpose is.
   c. Does the writer follow his or her purpose through the whole composition?
   d. Find any sentences that do not support the writer's purpose.
3. *Content*
   a. Can you summarize this piece in a sentence?
   b. Is it clear or are there parts you found confusing?
   c. Does the writing contain new and interesting information?
4. *Audience*
   a. Who is the audience the author has in mind?
   b. Has the author included all the information the audience needs to know? Or too much?
   c. Find any places where the audience might need more information.
5. *Organization*
   a. Has the author organized the writing so you can follow the arguments clearly?
   b. Does the writing move smoothly from one point to another?
6. *Style*
   a. Is the writing interesting? If not, why not?
   b. Has the author chosen the right words?
   c. Are all the sentences of the same length and type or has the author varied them?
7. *Language and Mechanics*
   a. Are the sentences grammatically correct?
   b. Are the spelling and punctuation correct?

These questions cover much material and will not be suitable for all levels of students and all types of prose. The students will need training in knowing what to look for as they answer these questions, and so at first it may be necessary to choose several key concepts and have the students concentrate on them rather than having them work through all the questions at once. The style, language, and mechanics of the compositions should

not be examined until the questions of value, purpose, content, audience, and organization have been fully answered. When dealing with specific prose forms, you may wish to add questions that will direct your students' attention toward organizational techniques specific to the mode of writing being examined. For example, in narrative emphasize adverbs of time that indicate the sequence of events.

After the editing procedures have been modeled for the whole class, arrange your class in groups of three to five students of varied ability and have them read and evaluate one another's compositions, using the editing guide you have given them. The arrangement of your groups of students may be limited by the type of desks and their arrangement in the classroom. Experiment with various desk arrangements in an empty classroom in order to anticipate any problems that will arise when you ask your students to move their desks. Crowhurst (1981:58) gives a number of useful suggestions about group work:

1. The reading and evaluation should be done independently, with all comments written on a sheet of paper separate from that on which the composition is written.

2. Be sure the students understand that their peers' comments are only a tool to help them improve their writing, and that they need not be followed.

3. No student but the author should make any changes on the draft the students are reading.

4. Initially all the comments should be written out, but as the groups become more comfortable with one another, oral discussion of compositions is possible.

5. The teacher should move throughout the class in a consultative role.

6. Choose examples of helpful and irrelevant comments in order to help the students make useful responses to their peers' work.

The teacher's response

Once our students have completed their assignments and have revised them to the point that they are happy with them, then we as teachers must respond to them. What is the most effective way of responding to student writing? Our initial response must be made in the way we respond to all writing—as readers looking for meaning. When we fail to understand what we read, we must ask why. Perhaps we are not the intended audience and so lack background in the subject matter about which our students are writing. However, if we are the intended audience, we must indicate to our students which parts of their writing we have not understood, in order to help them develop sensitivity toward their audience. The best way to respond to specific parts we don't understand is to ask questions that will help the students clarify their writing. In so doing, however, we must be sure not to change the focus of the writing completely from "This is what I want to say" to "This is what *you* the teacher are asking me to do" (Sommers 1982:150).

Second, we must resist the temptation to mark every error we encounter. There is no evidence to support the gut reaction of most teachers that the more ink we spill on a page, the faster the students will see all their errors and mend their ways. In fact, the contrary is probably true: The paper with every error highlighted in red is more likely to confuse, discourage, and anger students than to help them. In addition to discouraging our students, highlighting every error gives them an overload of information about their weaknesses (Lamberg 1980). Another danger of extensive teacher comments, according to Sommers (1982), is that we may be asking our students to do two separate and often contradictory tasks at the same time: edit the surface structure of a text (which implies it is a finished piece of writing) and concurrently develop areas of meaning in the text (which conversely implies that the text is not yet complete). We give our students a similarly contradictory task when we ask them to simultaneously condense and elaborate a piece of text.

Third, we must help our students see that revision is not punishment for not having written a perfect composition on the first draft. One way of doing this is to model our own attempts at the assignments we give them in order to show the stages of revision our own writing has gone through. This also helps us to anticipate the problems students may encounter in the assignments we give them, and prevents us from oversimplifying the writing process, which we tend to do when we ourselves are not writers.

When evaluating compositions, choose two or three types of errors on which you wish to concentrate and do just that. Grit your teeth and pass over errors that do not fall into the areas you are examining. However, be sure not to mix the levels of importance of the types of errors for which you are searching. For example, do not mix the evaluation of high-level skills such as clear topic development with lower-level skills such as sentence structure. And try to find as many good things to say about a composition as negative ones.

Limit intensive marking

Another way of reducing the marking load is to have the students submit only their two or three best compositions for complete marking by the teacher. The rest of their work can be evaluated by their peers and be given formative evaluation by the teacher. Because the summative evaluation is usually done on the basis of an externally set examination, the teacher can spend more

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An Interactional Approach to the Teaching of Writing

TERESA PICA
University of Pennsylvania

TERESA PICA is an assistant professor at the Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, where she teaches courses in second-language acquisition, TESOL methods, English for specific purposes, and classroom-discourse analysis. She has also taught English at the university's English program for foreign students. Dr. Pica received an M.A. in speech pathology from Teachers College, Columbia University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. She has published many scholarly articles based on her research on the effects of formal instruction on second-language acquisition and on student-teacher interaction in the ESL classroom.

The writing classroom can be a source of frustration to both language learners and their teachers. Required by the conventions of written English to express themselves at a far more precise level of grammatical accuracy and rhetorical organization in their written expression than in their spoken language, many students become confused, distressed, or even bored with the demands of their writing assignments. Confronted with a variety of instructional methods, teachers must decide which will work best for their students. They must also decide on the kinds of feedback that will have a positive impact on students' writing development and motivate them toward written communication. In an effort to respond to these concerns, the following article draws on current perspectives on second-language-acquisition theory and recent findings from second-language research. A critical review of traditional approaches to the teaching of writing will be offered in light of these theoretical and research perspectives. In addition, suggestions will be made for an approach to writing that takes into account important components of the language-acquisition process and, at the same time, responds to the needs of students and their teachers in the writing classroom.

Approaches to writing instruction

Two popular approaches to the development of writing skills, a models approach and a process approach, are widely represented in language-teaching textbooks, reference materials, and methods literature. These approaches are based on their authors' beliefs about and/or experiences with writing instruction, rather than on empirical evidence for their success with language learners. In addition, neither approach seems to be grounded in such theoretical claims or empirical findings on language learning as the following:

- The learner engages in processes of creative construction (Dulay and Burt 1974) and hypothesis testing (Corder 1967) in developing a second language. As a result, "errors" are an inevitable outcome of the language-learning process.
- Target- (second- or foreign-) language input must be made comprehensible to the learner in order for the developmental process to occur (Krashen 1981, 1982).
- Feedback in the target language plays an important role in language learning (Krashen and Seliger 1975, Vigil and Oller 1976).

1. A Models Approach. A models approach, with its emphasis on exposure to written sentences, paragraphs, and essays of capable writers, whether emphasizing grammar rules (Arapoff 1969, Dykstra 1965, Moody 1965, Paulston 1972, Paulston and Dykstra 1973) or

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rhetorical patterns (Bander 1971, Baskoff 1971, Kaplan 1967, Pincas 1964), is not reflective of theoretical claims that input can contribute to second-language acquisition only when adjusted to the learner's current level of proficiency (Corder 1967, Krashen 1981, 1982). With their insistence on accuracy, proponents of a models approach also deny the learner access to error production as a strategy for testing hypotheses about rules and constructions in the target language.

When viewed in historical perspective, a models approach to the teaching of writing predates current theoretical perspectives on second-language acquisition. However, many of the references noted above appeared after publication of critical components of the theory (e.g., in the writing of Corder 1967 and Selinker 1972). Furthermore, an emphasis on using models in writing instruction pervades many materials of relatively recent publication (e.g., Arnaudet and Barrett 1981, Blanton 1978, Imhoof and Hudson 1975, and Rainsbury 1977). A models approach overlooks the fact that students of writing in a second language are also language learners, and that therefore skills for manipulating grammatical markers, organizing paragraphs, and combining sentences are not learned all at once, through imitating written models. Rather, these skills must be discovered slowly, through the learner's active testing of hypotheses about how the rules and patterns in the new language function to communicate meaning.

2. A Process Approach. A process-oriented approach to the development of written expression (e.g., Zamel 1976) is based on principles of writing instruction to native speakers. With its de-emphasis on the final written product, and its concern for students' need to become aware of their purposes, their audience, and their need to communicate meaning, a process approach has much to offer students who are learning to write in another language. However, in its emphasis on revision as critical to the writing process, this approach overlooks the role of informative and affective feedback as critical components in second-language learning (see d'Anglejan 1978, Krashen and Seliger 1975, and Vigil and Oller 1976) and focuses instead on the writer's potential for self-correction as a means of achieving success in writing. Lacking native-speaker intuitions as to what is appropriate in their written expression, nonnative speakers must turn to more experienced writers to guide them in revising their work. A process approach, in placing the task of revision on the students themselves, does not meet their needs for feedback from more informed sources.

Despite their deficiencies, however, both models and process approaches do have merits. It is clear to anyone who has ever worked with language learners that the goal of the models approach—accuracy in producing target rhetorical structures, grammar, and lexicon—is essential to effective writing. In following a process approach, teachers give their students opportunities to review, clarify, and reorganize what they have written on their own, away from their teacher's well-meaning but often intrusive intervention. The written examples of a models approach provide input, and even though not written expressly for students, portions of this input are, no doubt, comprehensible to them. Since revision provides opportunities for students to re-examine their work, a process approach thereby activates their testing of hypotheses about the rules and patterns of written expression. Both approaches, under the direction of a conscientious and responsive teacher, will surely provide students with some amount of feedback regarding their work. Unfortunately, neither approach used in isolation can make all of these contributions to learners' needs. Even when the approaches are combined, however, their resulting integration provides, at best, minimal opportunities for hypothesis testing, input comprehension, and outside feedback.

3. An Integrated Approach. Much of the writing instruction in Raimes's *Focus on Composition* (1978) and *Writing for a Specific Purpose* (McKay and Rosenthal 1980) might be considered an "integrated" approach, in that it offers students opportunities to recognize and manipulate rhetorical and grammatical devices of the written target as it draws their attention to the communication of meaning. Using Raimes, students are assigned specific topics and are exposed to samples of related texts. They are then encouraged to employ syntactic and rhetorical patterns from these texts in their own work. For example, after they have read about different role assignments in a family from another culture, students are asked to compare the various roles held among their own family members. This activity stimulates their recognition of rhetorical and syntactic devices for signaling comparison and contrast. Follow-up tasks such as writing controlled compositions, generating sentences, and completing cloze passages allow students opportunities for further practice in individual areas of need. Despite its holistic orientation, the integrated approach lacks a grounding in second-language-acquisition theory and research: It is not focused on opportunities for the learners to test hypotheses about rules for writing in the second language, to receive written input adjusted to their own level of comprehension, or to be given outside feedback on the form and content of their messages. It is on the basis of these criticisms that the following "interactional approach" is suggested.

4. An Interactional Approach. An interactional approach to writing represents an attempt to supplement, rather than replace, the three traditional approaches to writing instruction described above. In an interactional approach, emphasis is placed on meeting students' needs both in gaining control over the conventions of written English and in obtaining opportunities for self-

expression. An interactional approach, however, is based not only on the needs of language students as perceived by their teachers and textbook writers, but also on insights from second-language-acquisition theory and research. Thus, its key components include provision of extensive written input and feedback to students' writing and the use of students' own work to serve as imperfect models for stimulating hypotheses about target-language rhetorical and grammatical structures.

Teacher feedback provided to students in an interactional approach differs from that given in more traditional programs, where the focus is usually on drawing students' attention to specific errors of grammar or meaning, and as a result generally takes the form of single words or short phrases. Thus, in its more traditional form, the feedback that students receive on their written work bears little resemblance in form or style to the writing they produce for their teachers. Students are expected to communicate in one kind of writing, while their teachers respond in a much different way.

In fact, the syntactic areas their teachers tend to correct—absence of tense or number markings on verbs and of determiners on nouns, use of phrases (fragments) instead of complete sentences, lack of paragraph development—are the very same structures and forms the teachers write on the students' papers as they evaluate them. Although they require that their students write in fully formed sentences, with cohesive paragraphs, with a variety of lexical items, with tensed verbs and numbered nouns, teachers seldom use these structures in their written responses to students' work. Most of the input students receive from their teachers is in the form of oral classroom lessons in grammar and rhetoric; phrase-level comments on their papers; underlining, circles, and arrows placed near errors in words and sentences; predictable vocabulary, incorporated into expressions such as "excellent," "nice work," "well done," "good introduction," "a strong discussion of the issues," "please rewrite this page," etc.; or formally stated rules about grammar usage. Some teachers provide little feedback in writing, choosing instead to provide oral critiques of students' work during conference sessions or in conjunction with peer discussion groups in the classroom. Anecdotal evidence from teacher and student interviews and information obtained from methods literature on the use of checklists for feedback on writing (for example, Knapp 1965 or Hendrickson 1980) tend to support the notion that students of a second or foreign language do not receive from their teachers the same kind of written communication that their teachers require from them.

Teachers' responsibilities to the writing needs of their students are perhaps greater than those required for their speaking needs, as these are often assisted by experiences outside the classroom or through conversations with peers within the classroom environment. Teachers are, in most cases, the only source of reaction to their students' written work. Furthermore, most students' writing is based on teacher-given assignments and is, in effect, directed specifically to their teachers. By responding to such assignments through phrase-level comments, imperative (hence, uninflected) verb forms, nouns without determiners, graphic devices such as circles and arrows, and oral critiques, teachers thereby tend to limit the *written* input that can serve as meaningful intake relevant to the writing skills they are seeking to develop in their students. Thus, they are unequal partners in written interaction with their students.

Research on approaches to writing instruction

There has been no substantive empirical evidence for the value of a models-based approach to writing instruction, and limited support for a process approach (Brière 1966). Interactional approaches based on teacher feedback to written work have shown mixed results (see Cardelle and Corno 1981 and Sharwood-Smith 1979 for positive evidence and Cohen and Robbins 1976 for less favorable findings).

A study conducted by the present writer (Pica 1981) provided support for an interactional approach, as extensive, paragraph-level, written feedback from teachers to students was shown to aid students' writing in English as a second language. The study compared the effects of this kind of "interactional" teacher feedback and that of the more fragmented nature described above. The content of the feedback was similar, i.e., it called attention to the form and meaning of the students' papers. However, the format differed considerably. The "interactional" feedback resembled the kind of written expression expected from the students on their papers, while the "fragmented" feedback consisted primarily of short phrases and fragments. Two groups of high-intermediate English-as-a-second-language students matched for native language and initial level of writing proficiency were studied. Five of these students received the "interactional" feedback, and five, the more traditional form. They all used the same writing textbook and their writing classes followed the same curriculum and format. Analysis of these students' written compositions before and after seven weeks of participation in the study showed that, compared with its "fragmented" counterpart, "interactional" feedback had a higher correlation with increased length of students' sentences and paragraphs and a decrease in the number of grammar-usage errors they made. Students who received the more traditional, "fragmented" feedback also improved, but not as much as the "interactional" group.

Since this study was limited to a small number of subjects and did not control for any additional input the subjects were receiving outside the classroom (e.g., in

the form of reading or tutorial help), these results must be viewed cautiously. Nevertheless, they might be of interest to teachers who feel that, despite their efforts to provide detailed evaluations of their students' papers, they see little progress in students' writing development. Teachers' writing back to students in the form in which they expect the students to write to them may be a key to solving some of the frustrations of writing in a second language. It provides students with more written input relevant to their work than they ordinarily receive. Since this input is directed specifically at them in the form of teacher feedback about their own work, it is likely to be more comprehensible than other sources of input to which students are exposed in their classrooms, e.g., textbooks, anthologies, and newspapers.

Suggested activities for an interactional approach to writing

In an interactional approach, written input to students need not be provided solely by their writing teacher. Students can evaluate each other's work or can write and respond to each other's concerns and interests. To assist this process, teachers should provide students with guidelines they can use as a basis for feedback about each other's work. Such a list could ask student-evaluators to respond to the following:

1. Can you find the writer's main idea? Tell the writer what you think is the main idea.
2. How many examples or reasons does the writer use to support the main idea? Do these reasons or examples help you to understand the writer's main idea? Do you think there are enough of them? Give your opinion to the writer about these examples or reasons. If you can suggest additional ones, include them in your evaluation.
3. Have you learned anything new from reading this paper? If you have, tell the writer about it.
4. Do you see any misspelled words? Do they make it difficult for you to understand what the writer is trying to communicate? Let the writer know which words you think should be spelled correctly.
5. Do you see many grammar mistakes? Do they make it difficult for you to understand the writer? Let the writer know about this in your evaluation.
6. Remember to begin your evaluation with one or two sentences in which you give your general reaction to the paper. Don't forget to say something good to the writer about the paper.

In addition to exchanging written feedback on their papers, students can also be encouraged to write their papers to each other. Too often, students direct their writing to their teacher alone. This sets up a very unequal relationship in terms of knowledge of the second language as well as writing experiences in that language, and serves as a source of anxiety for the students. Useful input can be provided to students if they exchange topics and/or questions with each other and respond in writing. Once a student receives a written response to a topic or question s/he had posed to a classmate, that student can evaluate the response in a paper or paragraph, using the guidelines above.

In an interactional approach, students' own work can be used as a focus for hypothesis testing, error correction, and revision. Examples of students' compositions on similar topics can be typed or rewritten by the teacher (to ensure anonymity) and distributed for evaluation and revision regarding a particular grammatical or organizational point, e.g., elimination of redundancy, achievement of cohesion among sentences, supporting a main idea, writing a conclusion, choosing more appropriate words. Here, instead of beginning with perfect models as examples to guide their writing, students are presented with imperfect drafts to revise according to specific areas of concern. This activity can focus on compositions, paragraphs, or sentences.

Overview

The activities incorporated into an interactional approach to writing instruction use models, but they are the imperfect models of students rather than the flawless productions of natives. An interactional approach encourages students to attend to the process of writing by giving them extensive opportunities for practice and revision, but the stimulus for these opportunities is based on feedback from teachers and peers and is not generated by the students' own private interpretation.

No claims are made here that an interactional approach is the best method for promoting writing skills or that it should be used to the exclusion of more traditional methods. Since many of its activities have been developed in light of perspectives on second-language acquisition, however, an interactional approach to writing instruction may offer a welcome alternative to more traditional ways of structuring the writing classroom.

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time working on the formative aspects of composition.[1]

When we take the time to respond to student writing, we should ensure that the comments we make will be as helpful as possible to our students. The most effective way of responding to writing, according to Cardelle and Corno (1981), is to draw students' attention to their errors and strengths, using a combination of praise and criticism. Lees (1979) advocates a flexible, multifaceted response to student writing. She recommends asking questions, describing, and sometimes giving students special assignments to develop specific skill areas.

Conclusion

It is possible to teach composition to large classes of students if teachers are willing to surrender some of the control of evaluation through peer response, allow the students to do some writing that will not be evaluated, and limit the number and type of comments they make about their students' writing to those that are most useful.

1. We must still give our students practice at writing under the pressure of a time limit as a way of preparing them for their examinations. Help them discover which techniques allow them to find quickly what they know about a topic, organize this material, write it with a suitable audience in mind, and then critically assess what they have written.

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The Eclectic Way

DENIS GIRARD
Inspecteur Général
Ministère de L'Éducation
Nationale, Paris

DENIS GIRARD is inspecteur général for the teaching of English in France and currently chairman of the Council of Europe Modern Languages Project Group. He has been cultural attaché to the French Embassy in London, has taught English in Morocco, and has been the director of BELC (Bureau pour l'Enseignement de la Langue et de la Civilisation française à l'étranger). Mr. Girard is coauthor of two audiovisual courses and two bilingual dictionaries, and he has written several books on language teaching and a *Grammaire raisonnée de l'anglais* as well as many articles in English and French journals.

This article is a plea for an eclectic attitude on the part of the foreign-language teacher, who should endeavor to get the maximum benefit from all the methods and techniques at his or her disposal, according to the special needs and resources of his/her pupils at any given time. Such an attitude corresponds to the author's view of modern teaching-learning strategy and can be generalized only through a very exacting type of teacher training (both pre- and in-service).

Eclecticism

In the history of philosophy, the adjective *eclectic* has been used to refer to a class of philosophers who "selected such doctrines as pleased them in every school." That idea of "pleasing oneself" may be responsible for the derogatory connotation of the word *eclectic* as it is now commonly used. Yet one can take the word in a positive way, implying a degree of flexibility and adaptability that will allow the teacher to select among a variety of approaches, methods, and techniques those elements best fitted to the needs of a given class at a given time. Such a decision will not be taken on the spur of the moment in a haphazard way, but as the conclusion of a serious analysis of the situation and of the available techniques and devices.

I have always advocated for the language teacher an eclectic attitude towards linguistic theories, considering it his sacred right and duty to borrow from one theory or another, according to the help it can give him to make his pupils understand, internalize, and put into practice the way a linguistic pattern works and is used in communication. "He is not bound by any one theory, in contrast with his linguistic colleague, who is usually obliged to belong to one particular school. He can—and should—be perfectly free to choose, and to build up his work with the aid of any notion that may serve his ends. . . . Rather than fish in one linguistic stream, we should cast our pedagogical net in all waters that might bring us in a profitable catch" (Girard 1972).

My position has been just the same as regards psychological theories. I have believed that language teachers did not need to take sides either with Skinner and behaviorists or with Chomsky's theory of innateness, as there were good reasons to suspect that both habit formation and creativity were at work in the mysterious process of language acquisition and learning.

Yet one can be eclectic regarding the theoretical bases of language teaching while being a strong supporter of one type of methodology to the exclusion of others. As coauthor of an audiovisual course at a time when the audiovisual approach was quite new and could succeed only by overcoming strong opposition from traditionalists of the "read and translate" method, I knew

This article is based on a lecture given at the IATEFL conference in Groningen in April 1984.

that it had to be rather dogmatic. In particular, the retraining of language teachers to turn them into competent audiovisualists implied that for each lesson or unit the same succession of classroom activities should be followed, each one corresponding to a clearly defined objective. Teachers' books endeavored to guide the teachers through those various steps, leaving them little elbow room, even though the word "suggestions," which we often used, indicated that the teacher's invention and creativity were also being called upon. On the whole, it cannot be denied that there was little possibility for being eclectic.

Things have changed a great deal during the last 20 years, with the development of learner-centered approaches in all subjects and especially in language teaching. New methods have appeared, each claiming to be the best suited to the pupils' learning process: the cognitive method, the Silent Way, suggestopedia, community language learning, the natural approach, to name only a few. It would not be wise to ignore these various attempts at more efficient teaching and learning, though many of them are still experimental and are generally used in the more favorable circumstances of adult education rather than in schools. On the other hand, I would consider it unwise for a language teacher in the school sector to adopt one of these methods as a whole to the exclusion of everything else, except of course in an experimental way.

The eclectic way

The Eclectic Way is *not* a method; rather, it defines an attitude on the part of the language teacher. It is for me the only sensible answer to the terrible challenge of the present-day situation in most of our schools, with mixed-ability classes where every learner has his/her personal attitude toward the foreign language, his/her own ability and motivation (or lack of it!), his/her own way of learning, forgetting, unlearning, etc. It is neither for the didactician or methodologist nor for the textbook writer to decide which teaching technique the teacher must use at every step. It is up to the teacher, according to what he knows about the mixed bag of pupils he has in his class and about their various needs and attitudes (positive and negative) toward different activities or tasks. This does not mean that he can afford to ignore what didacticians and methodologists have to say about language teaching and language learning. Nor does it mean that textbooks will not be helpful: many of them, when carefully selected, will provide useful guidelines and a wealth of graded teaching materials and exercises that will lighten the teacher's task, providing he does not become a slave to the author's suggestions. In the same way, he will find interesting insights into his profession in the writings of linguists and psychologists. But in the end, the eclectic teacher will make his personal choices on the basis of the *questions* he will have to ask himself, as he goes along, about the main issues of language teaching, and on the basis of the answers he will be able to give in connection with inescapable criteria.

Training teachers for the eclectic way

One can easily foresee that it is only the well-trained teacher who is going to be able to become eclectic, to put into practice the Eclectic Way. The language teacher with no training at all or who has been given only a series of teaching recipes, with no theoretical thinking about the advantages and the drawbacks of such and such an approach for different categories of learners, is bound to be content with following his/her textbook as faithfully (or slavishly) as he/she can. He will not even have heard of the variety of approaches and methods: how could he then select the most useful elements at any given time?

Teacher training (both pre-service and in-service) must always come first in the preoccupations of educational planners and all those who wish to bring about any significant improvement in education. It is for having neglected that fundamental law, often because the financial means were not available, that the best-thought-out educational reforms have gone wrong.

The Council of Europe did not make that mistake when the new Modern Languages Project was launched in 1982 to exploit and develop the impressive research work carried out by the previous project during the 1970s, with the publication of "threshold levels" for several European languages and a number of connected studies. While deciding to promote further research in new directions, the new Project Group unanimously agreed to give top priority to teacher training among the actions that had to be undertaken, especially in the field of in-service training, where international cooperation was felt to be easier to establish than in the more sensitive and nationalistic area of pre-service training, which is far too often a battleground for antagonistic institutions.

The Council of Europe symposium which took place at Delphi in May 1983 was devoted entirely to the definition of European workshops for language trainers, who would then be better prepared to help language teachers at in-service courses to get more benefit from the findings of Council of Europe research in communicative teaching, while taking into account local teaching situations. The systemic idea which forms the basis of that research seems to me particularly appropriate to give teachers the kind of training that will allow them to become eclectic in a very positive way. It consists in starting from an analysis of pupils' needs and available resources to define learning objectives (both general and specific), then to select appropriate materials and teaching devices, periodic assessment being an integrated feature of the teaching process, allowing constant reappraisal and alterations (see the diagram on page 14).

Application of the Eclectic Way

MAIN ISSUES	QUESTIONS TO BE RAISED	CRITERIA
Main Objectives:		
comprehension/production	separate? simultaneous?	pupils' ages, needs
accuracy/fluency	what degree? correction?	type of activity
habit formation/ cognition	the two together? in succession? when? how long?	level reached
Content of Course:		
oral/written language	which first? what amount?	objectives, age, time
syllabus/no syllabus	what to teach?	institutional constraints
grading/no grading	what to teach when?	priorities, motivation
use of L_1	what amount? when? how?	age, needs, resources
Classroom Activities:		
skill getting/using	when? through what activities?	pupils' level, familiarity with language
acquisition/learning	what proportion? how?	pupils' ability and motivation
pupils' involvement	how to make them active?	pupils' ability and motivation
External Aids:		
audiovisual/oral	when? why? how?	type of activity
computer aid	when? why? how?	motivating power
Assessment:		
formative/normative	criteria-referenced? frequency? time spent?	degree of integration exploitation of feedback
self-assessment	criteria-referenced? frequency? time spent?	degree of integration exploitation of feedback

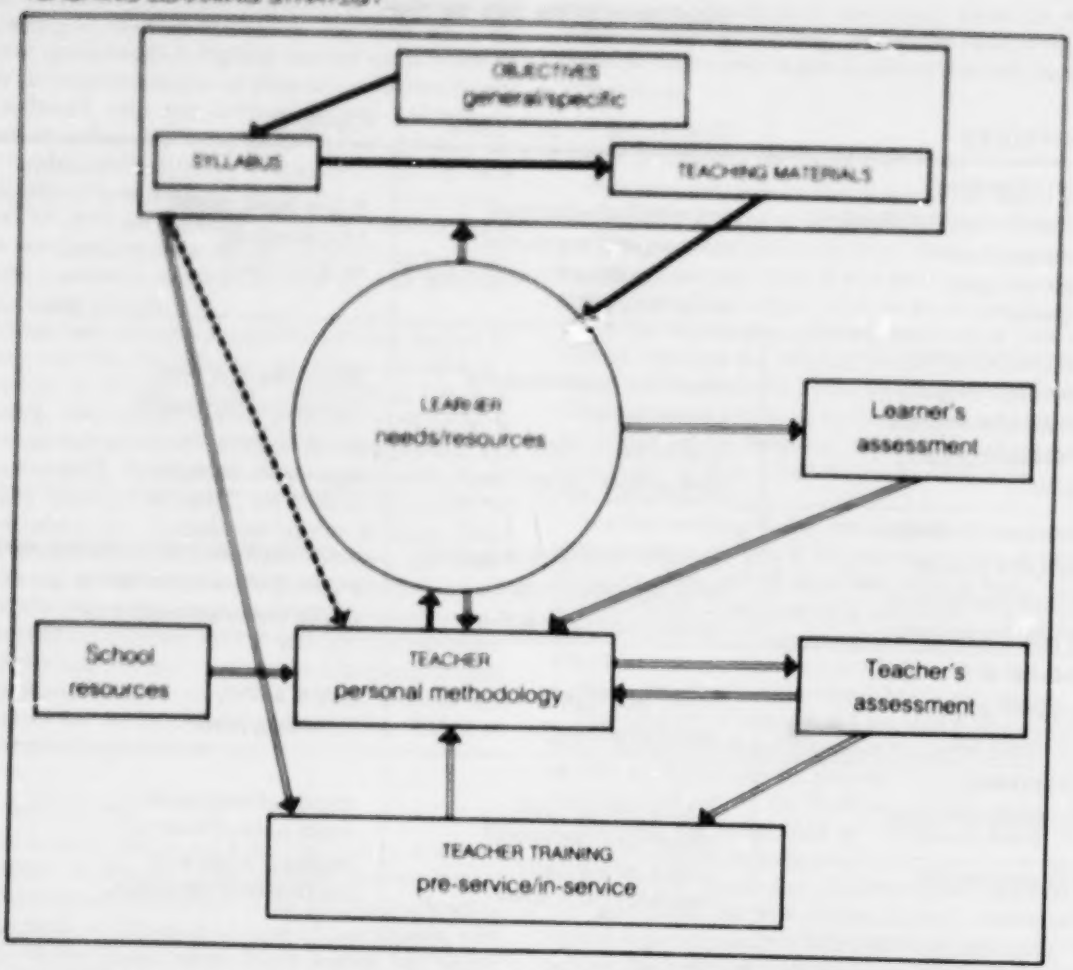
Since I had been asked to introduce the theme "Contents and methodology of modern language teacher training" at the symposium, I submitted a series of questions that should be kept in mind by all teacher trainers:

- How does one learn how to analyze the language needs of different categories of learners?
- How much importance should be given to communicative activities and how much to the teaching/learning of grammar?
- How can teachers' attainments be put to use to direct their teaching toward more communicative activities, starting from their textbooks, the texts at their disposal, and the recordings available to them?
- How can their creative autonomy be developed by training them to assign themselves specific objectives for each stage of their teaching?

This short sample is meant only to give a clearer idea of the kind of teacher training (as regards course content and personal methodology) that would best prepare language teachers for the Eclectic Way.

Conclusion

What I have been advocating under the provocative title of "The Eclectic Way" is now more and more often suggested in various ways by language didacticians, starting with the chairman of IATEFL, Peter Strevens (1977): "The complex circumstances of teaching and learning languages—with different kinds of pupils, teachers, aims and objectives, approaches, methods and materials, classroom techniques, and standards of achievement—make it inconceivable that any single method could achieve optimum success in all circumstances." M. Sharwood-Smith (1981) wants "a multifaceted approach." J. Harmer (1983) favors "a balanced activities approach." Alan Maley (1983) says that "we need to offer a variety in teaching which will give



equal opportunities to people with differing styles." Finally, I would like to quote another French didactician, Robert Galisson (1983), who expresses the following act of faith in his latest book: "Je me reconnais dans une didactique ouverte, éclectique."[1]

It is therefore quite clear that I do not claim to have invented anything apart from my title and an attempt at rationalizing an attitude toward methodology that I have already expressed on several occasions, particularly in a lecture I was invited to give at the Institute of Linguists some years ago (Girard 1975). I will conclude now, as I did then, by paying a legitimate tribute to the great Harold Palmer (1922), whom I consider the real father of my Eclectic Way, for he defined his own "complete method" as early as 1922, in his famous *Principles of Language-Study*: "The 'complete method' is not a compromise between two antagonistic schools; it boldly incorporates what is valuable in any system or method of teaching and refuses to recognize any conflict, except the conflict between the good and the inherently bad. The complete method will embody every type of teaching except bad teaching, and every process of learning except defective learning."

1. I am all in favor of an open, eclectic way of teaching.

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Vocabulary Teaching in the Foreign-Language Classroom

ROLF PALMBERG
Åbo Akademi

Since 1979, ROLF PALMBERG has been a senior lecturer in English teaching methodology on the Faculty of Education of Åbo Akademi, the only Swedish-medium university in Finland. Before he began teaching EFL and methodology to teacher trainees, he was a research assistant in an error-analysis project in the Department of English of Åbo Akademi. He has written several articles on applied linguistics and English teaching methodology, and is coauthor of a book containing communicative activities for learners of Swedish as a second language.

Although language does not draw a clear distinction between grammar and vocabulary, linguists generally do. For the last 40 years or so, applied linguists have been mainly preoccupied with theories accounting for grammatical patterns and syntactic development in foreign-language learners, neglecting, it has been claimed, vocabulary (Marton 1977, Meara 1980, Levenston 1979, etc.). The purpose of this article is to present and discuss some of the work done in the field of foreign-language vocabulary from the EFL teacher's point of view, excluding therefore research into vocabulary with no direct relevance to the teaching situation. The issues will be tackled from three main angles: approach, method, and technique.

The role of vocabulary in six approaches to foreign-language teaching

Throughout this century, there has been great diversity in the prevailing approaches to foreign-language teaching. Often shaped in response to contemporary trends in linguistics or psychology, a number of approaches have succeeded and replaced one another, tending, as a rule, to deny the advantages of the preceding ones. To give but one example, the use of the native language in the foreign-language classroom has been, in turn, stressed, banned, demanded, and barely tolerated (Prator 1979). In the same way, the attitudes of foreign-language teachers and learners towards vocabulary have undergone several changes depending on the way in which each approach emphasized different language skills and, above all, the role of vocabulary. The present section will briefly outline the role of vocabulary in six major approaches to foreign-language teaching: the grammar-translation approach, the reading approach, the direct method, the audiolingual approach, the cognitive approach, and the communicative approach (e.g., Chastain 1976, Celce-Murcia and Rosensweig 1979, Stern 1983).

In the early days of the *grammar-translation* (or traditional) *approach*, the primary aim of teaching was a thorough knowledge of the foreign-language grammar. Having learned a new grammatical rule, the learner was expected to practice it through translation exercises from the native language into the foreign language or vice versa, using, when necessary, word lists or dictionaries. Since the main emphasis was on the recognition of written words and the production of written translations, the learners were mostly unable to speak or understand natural speech in the foreign language even after studying for five or six years. Later on, the same shortcoming was also ascribed to the *reading approach* developed by West in the late 1920s. This approach, as the name suggests, deliberately restricted its primary aim to both intensive and extensive reading skills in the foreign language, at the same time assigning a central role to the teaching of vocabulary.

During the first quarter of the century and in the late 1950s, respectively, two distinct approaches to foreign-language teaching gradually developed to provide a remedy for the state of affairs where foreign-language learners were unable to produce and comprehend foreign-language speech. The *direct method*[1] (also called the "reform method," "natural method," "psychological method," and "phonetic method" [Stern 1983]) was based on inductive rather than deductive learning, emphasizing the teaching of oral skills directly by means of communication. The use of the native language was not tolerated in the classroom, and translation as a teaching technique was strictly forbidden. It was assumed that the learners would learn vocabulary in context as an integral part of each lesson, e.g., by acting it out.

The "aural-oral" approach, on the other hand, originated from the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) initiated during World War II in the United States, and possessed elements traceable both to Bloomfieldian structuralism and to behavioristic psychology (cf. Newton 1979, Chastain 1976). The approach appeared under various names (see Stern 1983:463) until Brooks proposed the term *audiolingual* in 1960. As indicated in its name, this approach, like the direct method, concentrated largely on listening and speaking skills. The techniques used to produce correct language habits in the learners were, above all, oral imitation, memorization, and drills. Vocabulary teaching, however, was kept to a minimum until the learner had developed a firm control of the basic structural patterns and was able to express himself freely within a limited area of the foreign language (e.g., Rivers 1968).

The *cognitive approach* to foreign-language teaching, which developed in the late 1960s, had, broadly speaking, the same teaching aims as the audiolingual approach. Introduced by Carroll (1966), who was the first to describe a cognitive theory of language teaching, it combined elements from the grammar-translation approach and an updated direct method with those of contemporary cognitive psychology. In the words of Chastain, who makes use of the competence/performance distinction introduced by Chomsky in 1965, the learner "is seen as consciously acquiring *competence* in a meaningful manner as a necessary prerequisite in the acquisition of the *performance* skills" (Chastain 1976:146). The "necessary prerequisite," in Chastain's terms, equaled a firm knowledge of the grammatical rules of the foreign language. After that, however, new sounds, structures, and vocabulary were given equal importance. There was, in fact, a renewed interest in vocabulary, especially as far as the expansion of vocabulary knowledge for reading purposes was concerned.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, the introduction and elaboration of the concept of communicative competence (first referred to by Hymes [1971]) as opposed to Chomsky's "linguistic competence" had a widespread influence on the development of foreign-language teaching. Such *communicative approaches* to foreign-language teaching were often learner-centered in nature, and stressed the importance of learning through the use of the foreign language. Furthermore, they generally encouraged vocabulary practice and aimed at providing learners with opportunities to interact with one another and the teacher in as "natural" situations as possible (e.g., Widdowson 1978 and the collection of papers edited by Brumfit and Johnson 1979). Examples of such "new thought" in language pedagogy are Curran's *community language learning* (1972), Gattegno's *The Silent Way* (1972), and Lozanov's *suggestopedia* (1979). Very promising results for vocabulary learning have been reported with suggestopedia in particular, which combines the conscious and the unconscious in learning by making maximum use of the capacity of the brain, and also in its derivative SALT ("System of Accelerative Learning Techniques," e.g., Schuster 1976).

Vocabulary selection and grading in foreign-language teaching

Whereas the various approaches to foreign-language teaching have assigned different values to the relative importance of vocabulary knowledge as a teaching aim, methods have been concerned with the quality and quantity of words to be taught. A major inspiration for foreign-language teaching was the application of linguistics, which brought with it not only a stronger awareness of practical language ability as a primary teaching aim, but also an increasing need for principles to guide teachers in their choice of classroom materials. As for vocabulary, decisions as to what vocabulary to be included in different syllabuses have generally been made by educational authorities and textbook writers, less often by individual teachers. The extent to which such vocabulary selection has taken into consideration the needs of the learners and the aims and the length of the course has varied enormously.

All vocabulary selection is in one way or another based on frequency counts. The first word lists compiled for EFL purposes were *The Teacher's Word Book* by Thorndike in 1921 (an enlarged version of which was produced in 1944 by Thorndike and Lorge) and *Basic English*, devised in 1923 by Ogden and Richards (Ogden 1968). Thorndike's work and *Basic English* (which was an attempt to simplify and rationalize language-learning problems by providing the learners with a minimum vocabulary consisting of 850 English words) were later analyzed in Fries and Travers' comprehen-

1. Despite its name, the direct method is not a method as first defined by Anthony (1963), but an approach. A method, according to Celce-Murcia (1981:9), is a "set of procedures; a system that spells out exactly how to teach a language," and therefore more specific than an approach. Moreover, methods are typically compatible with one or more approaches.

ure survey *English Word Lists: A Survey of Their Adaptability for Instruction* (1950). This survey also included the work of Palmer, who in 1917 tried to develop rational principles for vocabulary selection based on theoretical disciplines not yet well developed at that time (i.e., linguistics and psychology; cf. Palmer 1968, Stern 1983). Other well-known word lists are the *General Service List* compiled by West (1953; originally published in 1936), the Brown Corpus compiled by Kučera and Francis (1967), and the fairly new *Cambridge English Lexicon*, which is based on various word counts including the *General Service List* and the Brown Corpus (Hindmarsh 1980).[2]

For teaching purposes, however, vocabulary selection cannot be based only on the relative frequency of words. There will always be words that have a low relative frequency but which nevertheless are central to the needs and interests of a particular group of learners. Two such words are *chalk* and *blackboard* (examples from Wallace 1982), which are most useful to learners in the foreign-language classroom, but which may be of relatively rare occurrence in the total use of English. In West's *General Service List*, for example, the word *chalk* appears 78 times in five million words, whereas *blackboard* is not listed at all. The criterion of *usefulness*, therefore, is an even more important consideration in vocabulary selection than that of frequency, and especially so in ESP courses. Two other important criteria in vocabulary selection are *regularity* and *range* (the possibility of words occurring in many different situations).

Vocabulary selection must also take into consideration various grading factors. In other words, course planners must make careful decisions as to the number of words that learners can, may, or have to master within the available time.[3] Their planning must also deal with the grouping of words, the order in which new words are presented, and the ways in which words already presented are recycled or repeated (cf. Pimsleur 1967, and, for two comprehensive reviews of various experimental findings on foreign-language vocabulary learning, Meara 1980 and Nation 1982). As always, however, such decisions are largely dependent on the teaching objectives of the course.

A good example is the presentation of vocabulary, which can be arranged in either of two ways: through *linear* or through *cyclical* progression (Cunningsworth 1984:25ff.). Whereas a course with a linear progression deals exhaustively with each new word before moving on to the next one, a cyclical course moves fairly quickly from one new word to another, returning, however, to the word at regular intervals throughout the course. In effect, learners following a linear course learn each word thoroughly, but due to the large number of words in a language a considerable amount of time must pass before they can achieve any sort of communicative competence. In a cyclical course, on the other hand, learners develop communicative competence at a much earlier stage, while being less accurate.

In general, individual teachers find attempted answers (although not necessarily based on research) to the question of how much new vocabulary should be introduced per lesson or unit from two sources: implicitly in the word lists presented for each unit in the textbook adopted for a course, and explicitly in the language-teaching objectives stipulated by national educational authorities. For example, the guidelines made by the Finnish National Board of General Education for the comprehensive school require that the learners "learn" a minimum of 250–350 words during the first year of English studies followed by an additional 500–600 words per year during the next two years, producing a total of 1500 words, 1000–1300 of which should be "actively mastered" (GRL 1970:70).

Such guidelines, unfortunately, tend to suffer from two limitations, which will be briefly touched upon in this context. One is that the guideline writers either fail to present any definition of the concept *word* (which is a necessary precondition of any estimate or measure of vocabulary size) or their definition is too vague (which makes any comparison impossible). Thus, the information on word quantities in the various frequency counts and word lists referred to above are generally not comparable due to the writers' different classifications of, for example, *lexical items*, *idioms*, or *prefabricated patterns* (cf. Wallace 1982, Faerch et al. 1984) in relation to *words*. The writers of *Basic English*, for example, showed that it is possible to express "almost anything we normally desire to say" in English using their selection of 850 "words" (Ogden 1968:5). Their list, however, included words such as *go*, *get*, *put*, *on*, and *off*, each of which has dozens of meanings (or, rather, "potential for meaning" [Faerch et al. 1984:78]) in isolation and in combination, creating a learning task that is much greater than the number 850 might suggest (Wallace 1982). There are calculations indicating that the 850 words do, in fact, have as many as 12,425 meanings (Nation 1983:11). On the other hand, such "high coverage words" (Faerch et al. 1984:87) enable learners to achieve a certain level of communicative competence

2. Two recent reviews of word lists are Fox and Mahood (1982) and Nation (1983).

3. It is a commonplace that languages that are related to one another contain, to different extents, words that are similar in form and in meaning (e.g., Lado 1957:82ff.). Such cognates are relatively frequent, for example, in English and in Swedish, a fact that enables even young Swedish-speaking learners to recognize English words for their Swedish equivalents (Palmberg 1984). Some cognates, however, are deceptive in nature insofar as their meanings have diverged, either partially or totally. A possible way of increasing vocabulary-learning potential in learners learning a foreign language that is related to their native language would be the deliberate delaying of the inclusion of "false friends" in the teaching of the foreign-language vocabulary until a substantial number of "true" cognates have been learned.

fairly rapidly because of their usefulness, for example, when paraphrasing.

The second limitation has to do with imprecisely formulated definitions of what it means to "know" or "master" a word for a particular group of learners for a particular purpose. A common distinction made in official guidelines and in contemporary literature in general is that between "passive" and "active" or "receptive" and "productive" knowledge of a language (see, for example, Meiko Teichroew's [1982] survey of receptive vs. productive vocabulary), which, however, is too crude when it comes to vocabulary knowledge (Levenston 1979, Faerch et al. 1984). It is, in fact, more accurate to view vocabulary knowledge as "a continuum between ability to make sense of a word and ability to activate the word automatically for productive purposes" (Faerch et al. 1984:100). To fully "know" a foreign-language word thus requires that the learner

- is able to recognize it in its spoken and written form;
- is able to recall it at will;
- is able to relate it to appropriate objects or concepts (i.e., knows the full meaning potential of the word and not just one specific meaning);
- can use it in the appropriate grammatical forms;
- is able to pronounce it in a recognizable way;
- can spell it correctly;
- knows in what ways it can combine with other words (i.e., in its correct collocations);
- knows the relations between the word and other words within a lexical set (relations of hyponymy, antonymy, etc.);
- is aware of its connotations and associations; and
- can use it on the appropriate level of formality and in the appropriate situations (modified from Wallace 1982:27ff. and Faerch et al. 1984:98–99).

In general, teaching objectives do not require that the learners acquire full knowledge (as defined above) of the whole course vocabulary. It is therefore desirable that the requirements of the teaching objectives as far as vocabulary is concerned are, from the outset, expressed in such a way that the teacher is able to find answers to the following questions:

1. How, for the present purposes, do the course requirements define a "word"?
2. How many words, using the definition given, are the learners expected to know on finishing the course?
3. What words are they expected to know?
4. What criteria of learning achievement are specified for each word or group of words to fulfill the requirements of the course objectives?[4]

4. This, of course, is a theoretical issue. In practice, teaching objectives for vocabulary-learning achievement are rarely expressed in as explicit a way as has been indicated above. And even if there were satisfactory answers and criteria given, there would still, as Ø Trampe points out (1982), be problems with respect to elicitation procedures, comprehension testing, the evaluation of correctness, and the measurement of fluency.

Techniques in vocabulary teaching

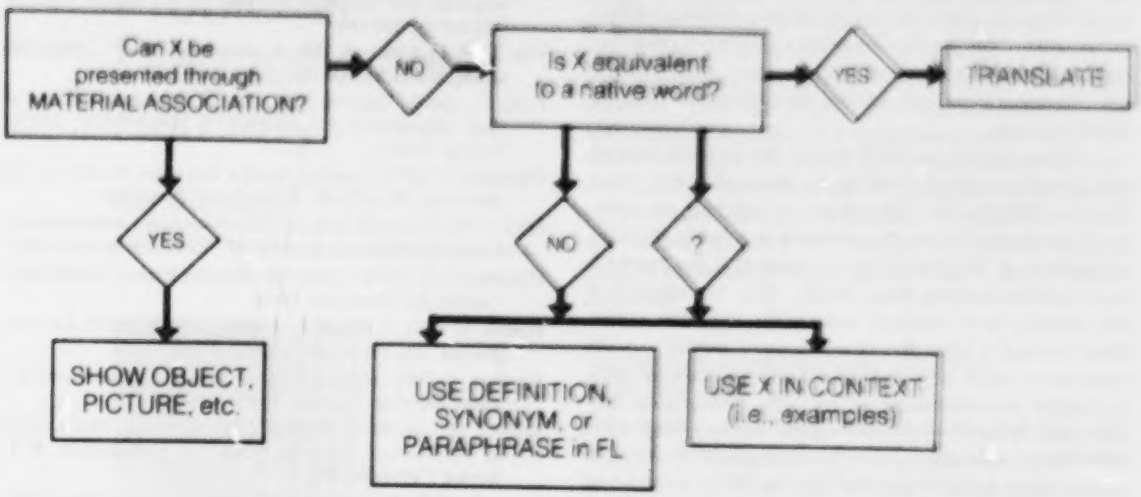
So far this article has concerned itself with the role of vocabulary in different approaches to foreign-language teaching and factors to consider in selecting and grading the vocabulary to be taught. When it comes to different vocabulary-teaching techniques, i.e., classroom devices or activities, it is obvious that variation may be expected in their efficiency owing to factors such as learner age, the objectives of teaching vocabulary, and the types of vocabulary items taught (cf. Celce-Murcia and Rosensweig 1979). According to Cunningsworth (1984:34ff.), teaching the active use of the meaning of a word proceeds in three stages: *presentation*, *practice*, and *production*. Of these, only presentation and practice fall within the intended scope of this article.

As the sections on vocabulary found in various EFL teaching handbooks show, there are many different ways of teaching vocabulary. The teaching techniques proposed and exemplified in the literature (e.g., Rivers and Temperley 1978, Celce-Murcia and Rosensweig 1979, Wallace 1982, Nation 1983, and Cunningsworth 1984) include presentation through demonstration (gestures, action-performing), visual aids (pictures, photographs, blackboard drawings, objects, transparencies), verbal explanation (definitions, context, translation), word lists, and lexical sets. These techniques are self-explanatory, and the authors of teaching handbooks generally agree that the techniques have their advantages and disadvantages depending on the factors referred to above. The authors do not, however, necessarily agree on the relative importance of the various techniques, as the two views presented below will show.

In 1917, Palmer (1968:49) presented four ways of "semanticizing," i.e., conveying word meaning, in the foreign-language classroom: by material association, by translation, by definition, and by context. The preferable order in which word meaning should be conveyed according to Palmer (unless conflicting with any pedagogical or didactic principles) has been illustrated by the algorithm presented in Figure 1 (Wikberg 1980:121).

Cunningsworth, representing a view expressed almost 70 years later, prefers the presentation of new words either through visual aids or in context to the presentation of words in isolation or in word lists (unless the words on the list form a particular semantic field). He is, however, doubtful as to the use of translation (which ranks second in Palmer's set-up), because, as he puts it, "translation tends to give learners the false impression that there are exact one-to-one equivalents between words in English and in their native language. . . . To base one's teaching on translation, unless it is done in a very sophisticated way, risks reinforcing this basic misconception about the relationships between languages" (Cunningsworth 1984:40; cf. also Faerch et al. 1984:77).

FIGURE 1



Discussing Palmer's preferable order of techniques for teaching vocabulary, Wikberg made the important observation that presenting word meaning to learners and making learners internalize the meaning are different things. For such internalization, he pointed out, it is necessary in vocabulary teaching to relate the word to others that tend to cluster around it in communication (1980:122; cf. also Channell 1981). A similar opinion was expressed by Cunningsworth, who emphasized that the special way in which the English vocabulary is structured in terms of lexical sets should be fully exploited in teaching (1984:18; cf. also Stevick 1976:11ff., Richards 1976).

Examples of exercises and/or activities that make use of different word relationships are given in Cunningsworth (1983a), Rivers and Temperley (1978:254ff.), Wallace (1982), and in several books on EFL games (e.g., Berman 1981, McCallum 1980). The following exercise from Cunningsworth (1983a:20) is intended for advanced learners of English:

> The following words are written on the blackboard or an overhead projector: *bowl, drill, egg whisk, frying pan, ladle, mincer, saucepan, screwdriver, spanner,* and *wrench.* The learners have to divide the words into two groups of related words and then find for each group one word that describes all the words in that group. (Two suitable superordinates would be *tool* and *utensil.*) The learners are next asked to find a word that describes all the words in both groups. (*Implement* would be one such word.)

In the same way it is possible to exercise and activate, for example, the use of English idioms and collocations by EFL learners (e.g., Cunningsworth 1983b). A variety of vocabulary-teaching exercises is presented in Nation (1983:54), from where the following example is taken:

> The teacher writes the word *save* on the blackboard. The learners, working individually or in pairs, are asked to find words that can combine with *save,* such as *money, time, souls, people, face,* and *energy,* by consulting their dictionaries.

Dictionaries, obviously, are important tools in most vocabulary-building exercises and activities. They are also indispensable when the teaching objective of a course is to give learners an extensive and adequate vocabulary for whatever purposes. The ability of learners to use a dictionary should therefore be practiced in class, especially as it is often wrongly taken for granted by the foreign-language teacher. On the other hand, it is equally important that learners' ability to make "intelligent guesses" (Madden 1980) as to the meaning of a word before looking it up in a dictionary should be developed. This is especially crucial in extensive-reading activities where context and general knowledge should provide the learners with ample opportunities of guessing the meaning of unknown words. If necessary, the learners could be encouraged to make lists of any "nuisance words" that they have to check for meaning time after time, and to review these lists regularly.

Conclusions

There are, inevitably, a number of factors that affect foreign-language learners' abilities to learn new vocabulary in classroom situations. Learner factors include the learners' native language, their previous language experience, transfer effects, and learning strategies. The task of the foreign-language teacher is to reduce the learning burden caused by the foreign language it-

self and to provide the learners with what Krashen (1981) refers to as "comprehensible input" which, according to Faerch et al. (1984:187) can be interpreted by the learners either directly by means of their existing knowledge of the foreign language or by means of inferencing procedures. Unfortunately, input may also be "incomprehensible"—it cannot be interpreted by the learners at all.

Teaching factors (as surveyed in the present article) may therefore affect learning in three different ways (Nation 1983:33–34). The effects of teaching are *positive* if the learners have progressed towards the stipulated mastery of English, they are *neutral* if the learners have learned nothing, and, finally, they are *negative* if the learners have learned something, but that something has upset what they have learned before. As for vocabulary, such negative effects can be reduced only by careful considerations of not only pedagogical factors such as word quantities taught per teaching unit, repetition, and teaching techniques, but also qualitative factors such as the effect of one word on another in terms of similarities between native-language and foreign-language words, exceptions, lexical sets, semantic fields, etc.

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Composition Problems: Diagnosis and Remedy

NAYEF KHARMA
Kuwait University

NAYEF N. KHARMA is an associate professor of applied linguistics in the English Department at Kuwait University, where he teaches linguistics, applied linguistics, translation, and lexicography. He obtained both his B.A. and Ph.D. degrees from London University and has had much experience in ELT as a teacher, supervisor, supervisor general, and ELT advisor at the Ministry of Education, Kuwait. Dr. Kharma has contributed articles to a number of professional journals, and has authored/coauthored four books. Currently he is engaged in an extensive project: "Comparative Study of English and Arabic Structures and Rhetoric for Translation Purposes."

Until recently, investigation of the difficulties encountered by students writing in English as a foreign language emphasized grammar and lexis. However, with the recent upsurge in sociolinguistic studies and increasing interest in discourse and text analysis, more attention is being paid to the supra-sentential aspects of composition.[1] This new interest has been enhanced by the realization of teachers of English composition at the intermediate and advanced levels that their students' more serious difficulties are not grammatical or lexical, but *rhetorical* in nature. A number of studies in *contrastive rhetoric*, initiated by Kaplan (1966), have compared English as the target language with the students' native language.[2]

Deficiencies in the students' command of the language

Rhetorical differences are, however, not the *only* cause of difficulty; several others have been mentioned by Kharma (1985) and others. I consider a major cause to be the students' inadequate command of the foreign language.

Since diagnosis of a problem constitutes a great part of the remedy, in this article I will first investigate the two causes mentioned above and then make suggestions for improving the current state of affairs, having in mind, in particular, the situations where EFL is taught as a subject in government public schools for five to eight years, as is the case in many countries of the world, including most of the Middle East.

First I would like to point out that a student who, at the end of his school course, may find little difficulty with the structure of English at the *sentence level*, may be incapable of writing a single paragraph properly. It seems to me that such a student suffers not only from ignorance of the rhetorical principles that underlie English discourse, but from a deficiency in the following two areas: (1) the ability to write *long sentences* that require various coordinating and subordinating tools, and (2) knowledge of the meaning and proper use of *linking devices*, especially those needed to establish intersentential relationships.

Problems with Long Sentences. If we examine any elementary or intermediate EFL course, we shall probably find that the longest sentence presented and drilled is composed of two coordinated simple sentences, or of a complex sentence made up of one main and one sub-

1. Cf., for instance, Sinclair and Coulthard 1975, Coulthard 1977, Hartmann 1980, de Beaugrande and Dressler 1981, Brown and Yule 1983, and the comprehensive survey by Gardiner 1984.

2. Examples of such contrastive studies are: Tsao (1983) for English and Chinese; Tsunoki (1968), Hinds (1983) and Onaka (1984) for English and Japanese; Deghanpishch (1973 and 1979) for English and Persian; Allen (1970), Yorkey (1974), Tadros (1976), Dudley-Evans and Swales (1980), Beck (1980), Holes (1984), and the more comprehensive Kharma (1985) for English and Arabic.

sentences. Although essential and useful, such sentences cannot convey the sophisticated ideas that maturing students want to express, and that they actually do express in their mother tongue. What is required is the type of sentence made up of a number of different types of independent and dependent clauses, and this is what the student finds it beyond his ability to construct. This difficulty is often aggravated by the differences in long-sentence structuring in the native and target languages. The native language, for instance, may prefer coordination to subordination, as is the case with Semitic languages such as Arabic and Hebrew. Other languages may have other preferences.

Problems with Linking Devices. The other, related, deficiency has to do with *linking devices*. English employs a great variety of these, both inside the one long sentence and intersententially, in addition to those used to link paragraphs together. These may be coordinating conjunctions such as *and, but*, etc.; subordinating conjunctions, adverbs, adjectives, pronouns, etc., such as *that, because, when, which, who*, etc.; adverbs such as *similarly, certainly*, etc.; or phrases such as *as a matter of fact, in conclusion*, etc. These devices cover a wide range of meanings: addition, contrast, comparison, emphasis, concession, exemplification, reason, conclusion, sequence, etc.

There are two main reasons for this problem: first, up to the end of the secondary stage (i.e., intermediate level of EFL) foreign students are usually not sufficiently trained in their usage and use; second, the student's native language may employ different devices to express the same meanings.

Rhetorical deficiencies

The second main cause of the difficulty referred to above has to do with the differences between the rhetorics of the student's native language and English (learned as a foreign language). In addition to differences in the preference of coordination or subordination, and in the usage and use of the linking devices discussed above, perhaps more important differences relate to the basic concept of the paragraph, and to the mode of structuring the paragraph and developing the main topic therein as well as structuring the whole discourse and the mode of developing the theme in it.

Whereas the paragraph in English is the main unit of expository writing, certain languages, such as classical Arabic, never had such a unit, and have only recently adopted the Western concept of the paragraph. Other languages may have had different concepts of the units of discourse.

Development of the main topic within an English paragraph is Aristotelian-linear, and with the topic sentence usually at the beginning, several different methods are employed to develop the main idea: exemplification, definition, comparison, cause and effect, etc. For the sake of coherence and unity, no irrelevant material is to be included, and no digressions are allowed. Moreover, the main idea is to be developed fully—that is, no important supporting material is to be left out. This is an oversimplification, but it is as accurate as possible for this brief discussion.

Other languages do not employ the same method of topic development, as Kaplan (1966) and others have pointed out. In fact, it has already been suggested that there are *major differences* in this area (Kaplan 1966:15).[3] Several scholars and teachers have carried out contrastive rhetorical studies of English and their native languages and have come to the conclusion that these differences not only exist, but also have a negative transfer to the writing of English by foreign students.

Remedial steps

Now we come to the crucial question: what practical steps can be taken to improve the situation?

My suggestions will be divided into two parts: those that concern the pre-tertiary and then the tertiary level.

The Pre-Tertiary Level. At this level what is needed is *preparation* for composition proper, which will be the main task of the tertiary level. This preparation can take the following forms:

1. Constant and systematic *use of reading material* to introduce the main rhetorical features of English. These should not be limited to the cohesive devices employed but should also cover the overall organization of the paragraph and the various methods of developing the main idea.

2. Use of written exercises that require the students to connect sentences by means of the proper *linking devices*. This practice must not be limited to *two* sentences but must be extended to cover *more than two sentences* and the use of subordinating as well as coordinating techniques. Such exercises must be graded, beginning with those where all linking devices are provided for the student, and ending with none of them being given. The student should eventually be able to supply them himself/herself. (Cf. examples of such exercises in Kameen 1978 and Ross 1968.)

3. *Punctuation exercises* are also crucial at this stage. Punctuation marks should be introduced systematically, with their functions explained, and drilled intensively. Several types of these exercises are possible, beginning with the easiest, such as those concentrating on one or two punctuation marks at one time.

4. Another useful exercise at this stage is the rearranging of *scrambled sentences* into a proper paragraph. This can be done first with narratives and descriptions, and later on used with expository para-

3. Describing Semitic languages, for instance, Kaplan states that "paragraph development is based on a complex series of parallel constructions, both positive and negative." In Oriental languages, on the other hand, he says that development of the topic "may be said to be turning and turning in a widening gyre." He also tries to point out some of the differences between English and other European languages, such as French, Spanish, and Russian.

graphs. Needless to say, the exercises and language should be within the students' ability.

5. A *non-paragraphed text* can be studied and broken into two or three paragraphs. This exercise may be started toward the end of the secondary level, and followed up later.

The Tertiary (University) Level. Most exercise types mentioned for the pre-tertiary level should be followed up at a higher level at the university, especially in an introductory intensive course, if there is one. However, at this level concentration should be on the overall organization of the paragraph and the whole discourse, and on the various methods of developing a main idea. "The student needs to be taught the 'logic' which is reflected in the rhetoric in the same way that he has had to learn the 'logic' reflected in the grammatical patterns" (Kaplan 1967:16). Therefore, all training at this level should be based on the paragraph as the smallest unit of the essay, just as the sentence was taught as the smallest unit of the paragraph. This can be achieved in several ways, some of which are described below.

1. Model paragraphs, each employing *one rhetorical technique* to develop the main idea embodied in the topic sentence, are read and fully analyzed. In preparation for reproduction of the same paragraph from memory, or imitation of a similar one on another theme, several types of recognition and production exercises can be carried out. Here are some suggested techniques:

- Recognition and/or production of the topic sentence and of supporting sentences.
- Recognition and/or production of linking/transitional devices, and the function of each.
- Recognition and/or production of punctuation marks.
- Filling in blanks where parts of sentences, particularly subordinate clauses, have been left out.
- Recognition and/or production of variety at the beginning and in the structure of sentences in the paragraph.
- Agreement on the topic sentence of a new paragraph to be attempted.
- Ultimately, new paragraphs based on other themes and employing one developing technique should be attempted.
- This type of training should be continued until *all major rhetorical techniques* of paragraph development are covered.

2. Other models of paragraphs developed by means of *more than one* rhetorical technique should then be presented and dealt with in a similar manner. Emphasis at this introductory stage should be laid on mastering the art of writing *one paragraph* in accordance with the rules of English rhetoric. Any common deficiency in using the proper linking devices, referencing, punctuation, etc., should be minimized or eliminated by the use of exercises mentioned under the subheading *The Pre-Tertiary Level* above.

3. This might be the proper place to employ *contrastive rhetoric* in order to help the students get rid of the habits acquired through writing in their mother tongue, particularly if the teacher has noticed the transfer of such habits to the writing of English. The first step in this direction should be taken before the students proceed in their training to the writing of longer than one-paragraph compositions. This should be followed up later, of course, in order to deal with the problems of paragraphing and transitional devices employed in longer discourse. The contrastive rhetoric training may be helped by the use and analysis of passages translated from the students' native language.

4. The process of expanding the theme into several paragraphs should be slow and systematic. This is an area that does not normally receive sufficient attention. To assume that a student who can compose a proper paragraph is also capable of writing a longer piece of discourse without further training is an error as to say that once the student has mastered the syntactic structures of English he is capable of writing a proper paragraph. The training required here can make use of some of the techniques advocated above. But other techniques are also necessary:

a. Model passages starting with *three paragraphs* may be employed to help the student recognize the overall structure of the discourse, the transitional and referential devices between paragraphs, the function of each paragraph, the various devices including syntactic and lexical devices used to ensure coherence, etc.

b. Exercises similar to those recommended for the paragraph, this time at the level of longer discourse, may be employed.

c. The *outline* technique should constitute the backbone of training at this level, first by having the students outline passages read and discussed, and later having them fill in the missing parts in an outline prepared by the teacher. Finally, they should be able to do their own outlines for the essays they are asked to write.

d. At a higher level, the students should be trained to distinguish between different *registers and styles*. Levels of formality, modes of address, use of lexical items, etc., differ from one culture to another, and are, therefore, subject to training too. The different types of discourse appropriate for a personal, an official, or a business letter; for an article, a short item, an editorial, or an essay in a newspaper; for scientific as opposed to literary writing; and for a research paper, a report, a thesis, or other types of academic writing all deserve special treatment. The introduction of and training in writing of one or more of these different types depend on the particular situation and specialization of each group of students, so that they get what they actually need.

5. *Finally, any piece of writing the student produces should have a purpose and should address a particular audience. As far as it is practically possible, the student should feel that he is writing something that has a special function and that will generate a reaction from the reader. Actual feedback is a strong motivating factor.*

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The Structure of a Technical Text and Its Pedagogical Implications

S. J. SINGH and T. CHACKO
Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore

S. J. SINGH is an associate professor of English language and linguistics at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, where his duties include giving graduate-level courses in technical writing, speech communication, and research reporting. He studied applied linguistics and ELT at the University of Leeds and the Overseas Visual Aids Centre, London, and later specialized in stylistics and professional communication. His publications include articles on curriculum planning for EST, technical terms in science and literature, and problems of translation.

THOMAS CHACKO taught effective communication, conversational English, and technical writing at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, and now teaches professional communication, scientific English, research reporting, and other similar courses at graduate and undergraduate levels at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. Dr. Chacko has an M.A. in English language and literature and a Ph.D. in linguistics. His current research interests include philosophy of language, theoretical linguistics, and cognitive sciences. He has presented papers on Indian languages, literature, and language teaching at various conferences.

Professional writing is a complex function of three kinds of competence: technical or subject competence, logical or organizational competence, and linguistic competence. Good technical writing is an expert and authoritative presentation of significant knowledge about a subject. It demonstrates logical sequencing and patterning of thought in such a way as to have the intended impact on the reader. It communicates the information clearly, effectively, and unambiguously within a rhetorically suitable format. It employs the linguistic and organizational strategies necessary to achieve a predetermined purpose. These characteristics, at a more abstract level, are applicable to other kinds of writing as well, for good technical writing is only a subclass of the class of good writing.

The above description is an idealization and, like all idealizations, is fully realized only in rare instances. This should not cause undue concern. What does cause concern is the reluctance of many scientists and engineers to strive for even an approximation of the ideal —or, worse still, their resistance to making such an effort on the ground that considerations of grammar, style, and organization are extraneous to science and technology, whose province is mathematical precision rather than linguistic discursiveness. As practicing teachers who have encountered such resistance from both our students and colleagues in science and engineering departments, we shall attempt in this article (1) to show that the characteristics of good technical writing reflect the nature of scientific inquiry and professional etiquette and (2) to demonstrate how they can, and should, be taught and learned to everyone's advantage.

One difference between scientific and nonscientific texts is the more stringent requirement placed on the scientific writer by the "logic of the situation" or the nature of the subject matter. A scientific writer describing a process or giving instructions, for example, has to honestly reflect the temporal order of the steps in the process. He cannot begin *in medias res*, as a short-story writer or poet can do.

A cross-section view of a technical text would reveal a number of systems at work to make the text a coherent and unified entity. We can adopt a systems-analysis approach to elucidate the role of the various components—the subsystems working within the three kinds of competence mentioned above and contributing to the overall organic structure of a text.

Technical competence

Technical competence involves not only an understanding of the subject matter but also an ability to analyze information into intelligible segments of ideas or events for efficient presentation and easy comprehension. We could call this exercise the "programming of the data." In traditional terms, this corresponds to giv-

ing the data a recognizable logical ordering, e.g., inductive ordering (proceeding from the specific to the general), deductive ordering (proceeding from the general to the specific), chronological or historical ordering, etc. In rhetoric, a text is categorized as descriptive, narrative, argumentative, or explanatory, according to the type of predominant logical ordering it exhibits. Scientific texts are also amenable to such classification, which we should use if it enhances our understanding of the structure of scientific texts. Borrowing another phrase from computer programming, we may say that competent technical writing is writing that makes its logic transparent.

To do this requires remarkable powers of conceptualization on the part of the writer. He must see clearly the connections, correspondences, similarities, and differences among the numerous ideas that form the conceptual base of his writing. Components of intelligence, such as generalization, discrimination, and pattern perception, have to be deployed, however unconsciously, by the scientific writer. An awareness of the purpose behind the writing and a constant evaluation of available details and results in terms of that purpose should also form part of the scientific writer's mental make-up, for he must select and reject details on the basis of their relevance to his purpose. Related to this is his judgment concerning the "salience" of the ideas or details selected for inclusion in the text. The positioning of ideas with respect to one another and the allocation of space (i.e., the degree of elaboration or depth of detail) to each hinge on this judgment as to their salience. At this stage, technical competence intersects with organizational competence, because it is the writer's knowledge of the field that governs the way he organizes material into the logical structure of the text.

Organizational competence

In terms of organization, programming leads to the building up of the text in blocks of interrelated paragraphs. Even though for the purposes of defining language and its functions the sentence is considered the minimal unit of analysis, for larger pieces of writing we take paragraphs to be the building blocks: each paragraph represents a major idea or an important step in the development of an argument. The paragraphs are interdependent, each aiding the other in making the whole a closely knit exposition.

The conventional wisdom about a paragraph, viz., that it has a unified structure—that unity being oneness of thought—underlies the fact that good paragraphing is a prerequisite for a well-developed and coherent piece of discourse. The conceptual nucleus of the paragraph, carried by the topic sentence, is located with respect to, and supported by, ideas contained in the satellite sentences. Each of these sentences has an obvious relationship to the others, and they combine to make a unified structure.

As a pedagogical aid for the teacher and a practical tool for the writer, we propose the notion of *relevant relationship* between the elements of contiguous sentences. This notion is based on the basic human tendency to find a relevant connection between things or events occurring together. Two things that occur together but are mutually irrelevant offend this tendency, and the human mind goes to great lengths to ward off such offenses. Thus, the utterance *John likes potatoes. He is going from Paris to Istanbul* will be interpreted by a majority of English speakers to imply that Istanbul affords greater opportunities for indulging in potato-pleasures than does Paris. This goes to prove two points:

1. Readers have a strong expectation of a relevant relation between two sentences occurring contiguously.
2. In the absence of clear relevance, readers interpret contiguous sentences in a way that appears relevant to them.

We contend that teachers can easily demonstrate the importance of this limited-coherence condition by using examples from everyday life (a question-answer pair is a good example), and that students can use it as a criterion for local coherence, which will ultimately ensure global coherence.

Organizational competence is also concerned with how best to accommodate considerations of intellectual integrity, authorial accountability, and professional etiquette. To explicate these notions, we propose a division of a text into *primary discourse* and *secondary discourse*. Primary discourse comprises the central argument or thesis of the paper and the writer's own ideas and experimental results directly supporting that argument. Acknowledgments, quotations, references, footnotes, bibliography, appendices, etc., constitute the secondary discourse. In our view, the incorporation of these features into professional writing—even more, insistence on their clarity and explicitness—is dictated by considerations of integrity, accountability, and professional etiquette. More than a sign of the corporate and cumulative nature of normal scientific research, they define a code of communicative conduct for the scientific community at large. Every initiate in this community is expected to explicitly acknowledge in his writing his intellectual indebtedness to individuals or groups whose work, results, or ideas he has made use of. He is also expected to make his references explicit enough to enable his readers to trace them and see whether the ideas have been used properly or not. Footnotes are a way of easing the reader's processing problems without burdening the main body of the text. A well-planned and well-formatted bibliography is an invaluable guide for one's professional colleagues who may need more information than is available in the piece of writing it accompanies. In our opinion, teachers of professional communication should stress the sociological or community dimension of secondary discourse, the correct

handling of which is extremely important for the professional advancement of scientists and technologists.

Böhme (1975:206) says, "In contrast to most other types of communication, scientific communication, however, is argumentation. . . . Moreover, the fact that each scientific utterance is an argument in a context of argumentation . . . tends to be cancelled by the very circumstance that in his publication, every scientist anticipates as far as possible all objections so that he may be sure of the acceptance of his contribution by his fellow scientists."

The practical consequences of this contention for the scientific writer are obvious. He must specify the context of argumentation, deal with likely counterarguments to his claims, and refute these with the results he has obtained. The components of secondary discourse as we have identified them here are some of the invaluable tools in this intellectual enterprise. They are indispensable also in establishing the "backings" or "warrants" of the scientists' "knowledge claims" which, according to Toulmin (1958), constitute scientific argumentation.

Organizational competence thus involves the ability to program the conceptual structure of a project, determined by technical competence, into a hierarchical framework of major ideas and subordinate ideas, reflected in the organization into paragraphs, as well as the ability to meld primary and secondary forms of discourse into a unified and acceptable piece of technical presentation. Now, the pedagogical and practical implications outlined above show how the boundaries of technical and organizational competence finally melt into linguistic competence.

Linguistic competence

Linguistic competence is the writer's ability to handle effectively and expertly the language component of the paper—that is, grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure. Grammar has sometimes been treated as an indication of "glamour." In status-conscious societies, the upper classes were sometimes distinguished from the rest on the basis of the grammatical correctness and general polish of their language. The distinction between "U-English and non-U-English" operates in maintaining social stratification. Technical writing in this sense seems to belong to an "elite" category, because in technical writing there is only one choice, and that is absolute correctness of grammar. The norms followed are those of "standard English," comprising universally accepted and understood practices of grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure.

What is more important, however, than the sociological stigma of bad grammar or the prestige associated with standard language is the philosophical fact that grammatical accuracy is a reflection of the concept of accuracy that is held at a very high premium by science and technology. Accuracy of measurements, observations, calculation, and predictions is an important criterion in scientific criticism and evaluation. Inaccuracy of any kind, therefore, is irreconcilable with the very nature of science and technology. Grammatical correctness in scientific works thus turns out to be not a concession to the elite and educated status of scientists as a professional group or to crusty old teachers of English, but an obligation placed on scientific writing by the subject matter at hand.

We would also point out that the very philosophy of grammar has undergone a change and that it is no longer looked upon as textbook maxims to torment students with. In the enlightened view of grammar now prevalent, it is seen as an inherent property of the human mind that enables the language user to produce and interpret an infinity of sentences. The criteria of appropriacy to communicative contexts and the possibility of ambiguity now enter into judgments about grammaticality. So grammar should not be seen as constraints on language use, but rather as principles of sentence construction whose violation would lead to contextually inappropriate and ambiguous utterances. Clearly, no instance of communication, let alone scientific writing, can run the risk of being either inappropriate or ambiguous.

This can be better appreciated when we see that incorrect grammar, spelling, and punctuation can distort the intended meaning of any statement. Look at the following:

1. The gauge on the outside of the boiler which was repaired last week is functioning well.

2. heavy water pipes

That ambiguity and vagueness result from careless syntax and punctuation need not be elaborated on.

Systemic properties

Our concern with the components of technical writing and the areas of intersection among them should not blind us to the systemic properties exhibited by the writing. By *systemic properties* we mean qualities or attributes that derive from the dynamic interaction of the components, or, in other words, qualities that cannot be uniquely traced to, or exhaustively explained by, any single component.

The "tonal" quality of a technical text is a systemic property. The persuasiveness of a proposal, for example, is a function of (1) the soundness of the central thesis and the strength of supportive evidence adduced to demonstrate the soundness (technical competence), (2) the manner in which thesis and evidence are integrated into a logically convincing piece of extended exposition or argumentation (organizational competence), and (3) the style of presentation involving the choice of words and structures appropriate for establishing the validity of the central thesis and getting a favorable response from a reader-evaluator (linguistic competence). A

weakness in any of these departments will weaken the persuasiveness of the whole document. Hence our characterization of it as a system property.

Simplicity, conciseness, readability, consistency, and general elegance, which are universally accepted as hallmarks of good technical writing, are also system properties in the view presented here. That is to say, any nontrivial definition or explication of these concepts will have to be made in terms of the interaction among the three components of technical writing we have identified.

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FORUM NEWS & IDEAS

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Writing Techniques

MARTHA MARINO

Southwest Petroleum Institute
Nanchong, Sichuan

I recently taught a university writing course in Thailand for which we had no books. In developing the syllabus, I devised some methods that were easy to use and which produced good results. Here is the procedure I used:

1. When the class began, I assigned a topic, and the students wrote for one class period. In this way, I knew they were doing their own work and didn't have time to memorize something from the weekly English newspaper.

2. Later, when I corrected their compositions, I made an "x" on their papers next to all the recurrent, common mistakes. Then I made a list of these errors.

Martha Marino teaches English conversation at the Southwest Petroleum Institute in Nanchong, Sichuan. She has a B.A. in psychology from the University of California at Berkeley and an M.A. in French and education from the University of Iowa. Before going to China in 1985, Ms. Marino taught English for the Peace Corps at the Prince of Songkhla University in Thailand, and she also has taught ESL in Germany, France, Japan, and Africa. She is author of a recent book, *Reflections between Two Women*, and has had various articles published.

3. In the next class period (we met on Tuesdays and Thursdays) I returned the corrected papers, which they had to recopy in class. While they were doing this, I wrote the incorrect sentences, from my list, on the board. They copied them down and tried to find the mistakes. Later, we corrected them in class and did oral drills on the items where they had made mistakes. For example: If they wrote *I go to home at 5:00*, instead of *I go home at 5:00*, my drills might be:

ME	STUDENTS
complete	
I went. . . .	I went home.
answer	
Where are you going?	I'm going home.
substitution	
He is going to the *store*.	He is going home.

4. After the oral drill, I gave the students five correct sentences from the list on the board to copy on their paper entitled "Sentences to Memorize." I told them that memorizing them was like memorizing poetry.

5. In the following class, before the students wrote their new compositions, I required them to write the five sentences from memory. I wrote some clues on the board: For the sentence *I went home* the clue might be *home*.

6. I graded these sentences while the class was writing their new compositions. If they had any of the five mistakes in their new composition, I lowered their grade one whole grade.

7. Some of the topics for their compositions were: "A Frightening Experience," "Caught in a Storm," "Describe Your Best Friend," "Tell How to Do Something," "Write Your Opinion about a Controversial Subject," "Give Information about a Topic," etc.

8. To vary my routine, I would sometimes bring in a set of magazine pictures and give each student a picture and a piece of carbon paper. Each student would write a short story or a description of one of the pictures for half of the period. Then they would read what they had written while showing the picture in front of the class. While they did this I would correct and grade their carbon copy. When they had finished, we exchanged papers, so they had the corrected one and I had one for my records, on which I wrote the grade.

9. It was necessary for me to grade their compositions weekly, and before the next class, but while one class was writing for the whole period, I would have time to grade another class's papers.

In conclusion, by having the students write short compositions weekly and working with their common mistakes, I found that their writing greatly improved. ■

A Practical Ten-Minute Writing Process

WU TEH-YUAN

Middle School Attached to
Shanghai Teachers University

In reading about Lozanov's Suggestopedia I realized that the conditions within which I teach English do not permit a direct use of this technique. However, I analyzed the active and passive concerts used in Suggestopedia to see what potentialities they might have for my teaching.

A two-part procedure

I feel that a good class should include alternating periods of voluntary and involuntary attention so that the classroom atmosphere can be one of both tension and relaxation.

This suggested to me a ten-minute writing process that is divided into two parts, the first involving voluntary attention and the second, involuntary attention. In the first five minutes I raised 15 questions and let the students think freely about and answer them.

The questions ranged over many different topics and were arranged to suggest to the students both thoughts and language so they would have something to write. Then for the next five minutes I gave the students a chance to express themselves. They could write whatever they wanted to, and could use the words, sentence patterns, and idioms that they had learned, but only within the time limit of five minutes. It was actually a kind of contest in which the students could vie with one another to see who could write more with fewer mistakes.

Below are the questions and passages written by four students in this ten-minute writing process.

Questions:

1. What day is it today?
2. What day was it yesterday?
3. What did you do yesterday?
4. Did you stay at home yesterday?
5. Did you go to a park yesterday?
6. Did you see a film yesterday?
7. Have you ever seen the film before?
8. How many people are there in your family?
9. How many lessons do you have every day?
10. How long have you lived at the school?
11. Who teaches you mathematics?
12. Who is your nextdoor neighbor?
13. When do you usually get up in the morning?
14. Do you see a film every week?
15. Do you often go to a park on Sundays?

Selected Passages:

STUDENT 1

Today is Friday. The sun is shining. We have already had four lessons today. Now we are having an English lesson. Our teacher of English is Comrade Wu. Next lesson will be a maths lesson. We don't like maths lessons, because they are not interesting. We like Chinese lessons. Our Chinese teacher is Comrade Dai.

Yesterday was Thursday. We all like Thursday, because we can see a film that day. Yesterday we saw a film. That film was a good one. It was very interesting.

STUDENT 2

My everyday life is very interesting. I often get up at six every morning, then I brush my teeth and wash my face. After that, I run on the playground. At seven I usually have my breakfast. I do morning exercises at a quarter to eight. We have four lessons in the morning and three lessons in the afternoon. I study Chinese, English, maths, P.E., drawing, biology, geography and so on. I have lunch at half past eleven. Lunch is often big enough.

STUDENT 3

Mrs. Zhang is our nextdoor neighbor. She has just retired. She does her housework all day long. I think she is doing her housework now.

Mr. Xiong is our nextdoor neighbor, too. He doesn't do housework. He is a worker. He works in a factory. He gets up early every morning.

My father is an engineer. He is a very nice person. He is 47, but he looks very old. My mother is a teacher. She is 47, too. My brother is ten years old. His birthday is on November 17. He studies in Class One, Grade Three. He is very clever, but I am not. My birthday is on September 27. I am 14 years old. I study at the Middle School Attached to Shanghai Teachers University. I'm in Class Three, Grade Two.

My mother is a very nice person. She gets up very early every day, because she is very busy. But my brother is very lazy, because he gets up at seven every morning.

STUDENT 4

Last week we had mid-term examinations. I have passed in them all. Today is Wednesday. What a fine day it is! The sun is shining now. We are having an English lesson now. Mr. Wu is our Teacher of English. He is a very good teacher. He is tall. We did morning exercises a few minutes ago.

There are four people in my family, my parents, my brother and I. My brother is a student. He is 18 years old. He studies in Fu Tan University. He comes back home once a week.

My mother is a teacher. She teaches Chinese in a middle school. Her school is very far away from my home.

Assessment of the results

Each of the above four passages contains less than four mistakes (including grammar, usage, and spelling). The first passage was written by associating questions 1, 2, 3, 6, and 11 with the student's own ideas. The second one was accomplished by the student on his own without any hitch, according to questions 13 and 9. The third one has not only more words but also more content. Drawing support from question 12, which was considered a brief introduction, the student began to develop step by step literary sketches of people, and he included a response to question 8. The last passage was an interwoven association of questions 3, 11, and 8.

Obviously, without the elicitation of question-and-answer drills, i.e., without the previous language suggestion and stimulation, it would have been quite difficult for students who have studied English for only one year or so to write such passages in only five minutes.

During the first five minutes of this process, students ought to respond quickly according to their own ability and experience. Then, in the second half of the process, they must express themselves independently (they can choose to write about any subject), autonomously (they can write something without hesitation), and responsibly (they should regard it as their obligation to acquire the language so that they can finish their writing within five minutes). The combination of the two different parts of this process provides a way of practicing English more actively and comprehensibly. The students can remember nearly all of what they have written without even reading through it before handing it in. This means they have learned a passage thoroughly within ten minutes. ■

Wu Tsh-yuan teaches English in the Middle School Attached to Shanghai Teachers' University. Since graduating from that university in 1978, he has done research in the TESOL area. Mr. Wu is studying the theory of language-teaching methodology, together with linguistics, psychology, and pedagogy, which he believes must be closely linked in language teaching. He has published more than 20 articles related to the subject in several publications in China.

HONG KONG

Self-Access Remedial Work in Writing and the Computer

EVA FUNG-KUEN LAI
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

I would like to share with you my experience in devising remedial exercises for students weak in writing. I used "correction cards" to give additional practice to these students and found this technique to be very helpful. Now that secondary students in Hong Kong have access to the computer, I am thinking of using the computer to provide self-access learning material for such students.

The need for accuracy

First of all, I may have to justify my insistence on accuracy in writing when the general trend is to place more emphasis on communication and less on correctness. Here are some empirical data: I asked some native speakers to grade five essays and verbalize their response while reading (an experiment to tap readers' reaction towards the text they are

reading).[1] In the transcribed responses, 109 out of 206 errors under syntax and 97 under vocabulary, and nearly all these are negative comments. The majority of positive comments come under content. This shows that readers are sensitive to errors, and the effect of errors on readers may be demonstrated by the comment made by an annoyed reader, "The mistakes slow down communication."

Hence, I would see accuracy as a basic requirement for effective communication. I think that students who do not have an accurate command of English have no foundation on which to build a repertoire for appropriate language use. If they have not acquired accuracy by the end of Form Five, they may have great difficulty in their tertiary education or in jobs where English is the tool for communication. It is the task of the English teacher to provide remedial teaching and bring students up to the required standard during their secondary-school days.

The source of errors

Errors are unavoidable for L_2 learners when their exposure to English is limited and when the need for the language is not apparent to secondary-school students. In the days of the structural approach, students were able to produce correct sentences when they adhered to the examples/rules given in the exercises. But when they moved away from such exercises and expressed their own ideas, they made a lot of mistakes, since their ideas were much more sophisticated than their English proficiency. These students started to learn English as a subject with a total class time of about four hours per week. This did not give them enough exposure to it to correct their false generalizations about the language.

Now that the communicative approach has been adopted in Hong Kong, students are encouraged to interact with each other as much as possible in class. Teachers usually give them the appropriate language to use and then focus on some of the errors the students make in their discussions and roleplays rather than drilling them in various structures. Although the English class is now more active and more meaningful, exposure time has not increased. To make things worse, as the amount of free verbal interaction increases, so does the number of errors. The fact that these students all use the same L_1 may lead to the fossilization of some of the errors, as communication among themselves is not hindered by such errors. The production of a stretch of discourse in English words but with a Chinese syntactic structure is common among weak students. They still manage to convey their ideas fairly well in their own groups, and teachers may sometimes not be aware of such errors. It is when the errors appear in writing that teachers can identify them and help the students express their ideas grammatically.

1. Data from my unpublished M.A. dissertation at Lancaster University (1983), "An Investigation of the Reliability of Double Impression Marking and the Criteria Used in It."

Eva Pang-kuen Lai taught English in secondary schools and participated in ELT workshops for language teachers at the elementary and intermediate levels for a number of years before going to Great Britain to further her studies in 1981. She received a diploma in TESOL from the University of Manchester and an M.A. in linguistics for ELT at Lancaster University. Miss Lai then returned to Hong Kong, where she teaches general English to business and social work students at The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

In the teaching situation in Hong Kong, where one teacher has to take care of a class of 40 students and most teachers have three or four English classes to teach, the amount of individual help a teacher can give is very small; often an improved version of a sentence or phrase in a student's essay is the most a teacher can offer. This can, of course, tell the student what is wrong, but it does not tell him why it is wrong nor help him to really master that structure.

The use of correction cards

With such constraints in our classrooms, it seems that additional help can be given only through self-access teaching materials. In the mid-'70s a group of teachers, including myself, who believe in the eradication of errors through more practice in correct usage joined hands to compile correction cards. We started with Form Four essays, since these students were old enough to work on their own and were eager to improve themselves for the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination. Our procedure was as follows: We first analyzed a number of essays to discover the common errors. Then we took these errors and wrote simple explanations of the correct usage (sometimes with the corresponding Chinese structure to show L_1 interference). Next we devised exercises at sentence level and put the answers on a separate card, categorizing these according to the different parts of speech. When a student made an error within a particular category, we wrote the number of the card on his essay, and he had to look for the card, do the exercise, and then check the answer.

Students responded favorably and told us that they were able to use the correct structure after working through the cards. This was rewarding for us, but very soon we found ourselves exhausted because of the constant need to add new correction cards to the stock. With more cards to handle, it took us more time to find the right card for a certain student, and the students also had difficulty in finding the required card, as a previous user might have placed it in the wrong box. Finally, we had to abandon the project.

How a computer might help

With the advent of computer-assisted learning, I am thinking of resurrecting the correction cards to help senior-form students, since the need is still there—Hong Kong students now make more mistakes than their counterparts in the '70s did, because there are more students learning English in the compulsory education system. I think the computer can help to solve the problems described above because it is useful both in the storage and retrieval of materials and as a source of teaching materials.

As I know next to nothing about computers and my only encounter with stored language is the LOB Corpus at Lancaster University, my suggestion is strictly on the layman's level. Nonetheless, I hope that computer experts and language teachers will give it a trial, as my past experience has shown that correction cards can lessen the workload of teachers and at the same time provide help for the individual student.

This is my suggestion: We should analyze the errors as we did before, but instead of writing the explanations on cards we can feed them into the computer for storage. Then we can print out from the corpus stretches of discourse containing the item in question.

We can either run the discourse in concordance or we can run a few lines before and after the desired item, depending on how much context we need for devising exercises. We can also choose a specific type of text, e.g., fiction, newspaper, or a science journal, to suit the students' needs.

For example, students tend to use the connective *meanwhile* incorrectly. After giving an explanation of its meaning and one or two short paragraphs to show how *meanwhile* is used, students are given 10 short paragraphs with one connective missing in each, and in six of these 10 the missing connective is *meanwhile*. Students are to identify the paragraphs in which *meanwhile* is the appropriate connective.

These exercises, together with answers, will be properly categorized. To meet the needs of students of different standards, the exercises can be divided into different degrees of difficulty so that when a student cannot get the first exercise right he can try easier ones until he learns the structure.

This use of the computer gives us the advantages of using authentic text while avoiding the problems of the correction cards. I hope teachers interested in computer-assisted learning will give some thought to this possibility. ■

ISRAEL

Summary Writing for EFL Students of Science and Technology

ARNA S. PERETZ
Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva

Arna S. Peretz is currently chairperson of the Department of English as a Foreign Language, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva. She holds a Ph.D. in education from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. Dr. Peretz has been involved in the fields of EFL/ESL since 1963 in classroom teaching, program administration, teacher education/training, curriculum planning, and materials preparation. She has worked in the United States, Turkey, and Israel.

It is widely accepted that English has become a language of international communication. As such, it is used by native and nonnative speakers to communicate with each other. The need to use English fairly often and with some degree of sophistication is most clearly felt by EFL professionals in the fields of science and technology. In fact, it can be claimed that advancement and job security are directly related to the ease with which the professional is able to communicate in English with a wide range of people.

EFL students of science and technology may deal not only with technical problems but also with organizational and managerial problems; the former are inevitably part of the latter. In order to propose a solution for a technical problem that is in turn part of a larger organizational problem, the EFL professional must communicate with different people from different backgrounds for different purposes. Moreover, the EFL professional's technical knowledge frequently needs to be transmitted so that such nontechnical personnel as salespeople and customers can understand it (Huckin and Olsen 1984).

One of the communication skills frequently needed by EFL professionals in the fields of science and technology is writing. Reporting results of investigations or suggested solutions to problems is often done in writing. EFL professionals need to be able to construct and compose arguments that are both logical and justifiable, to make suitable generalizations, and to identify, emphasize, and summarize main points concisely and clearly.

In an EFL setting it is possible to present the students with opportunities to practice such written communication skills, so that when they enter the real world they will possess the competencies that will enable them to be promoted to positions of managerial responsibility.

Procedures followed in class

Pre-Summarization Activities. The articles read by students of science and technology in their EFL classes can be categorized as *expository*. Expository structure is here defined as "a composition whose purpose is to communicate knowledge about a given topic" (Amiran and Jones 1982:15). It is important to explain the structure of expository articles to the students in terms of overall organization. The teacher should point out that the thesis sentence is often found at the beginning, that there is normally a concluding statement at the end, and that many writers clearly define in the introductory paragraphs what will be discussed in the article. It is a good idea to have the students identify such parts of an article as the thesis sentence, the introduction, important details/procedures/steps/hypotheses, and the conclusion prior to any writing.

Reading articles for academic purposes is not the same as reading newspapers for pleasure; the former demands a greater degree of concentration, precision, and intensity. The teacher should emphasize that one reading is usually not enough when the reader's purpose is to explain what the article is about, elaborate on the meaning with accuracy, or formulate a generalization. In other words, several readings are necessary when the reader, and especially the foreign-language reader, wants to completely understand an article.

The teacher also needs to instruct the students in note-taking and/or text-marking techniques. Ample opportunity for practicing these techniques must be provided so that mental processing will be increased, resulting in more complete and accurate work. Text-marking techniques include underlining key passages, making marks in the margin, and even writing notes in the margin. These techniques help readers remember what they read, distinguish between important and unimportant information, decide what should or should not be included, and locate important ideas for later reference. The teacher can use an overhead projector to illustrate text-marking techniques and methods of note taking to the entire class.

Summarization Activities. Before dealing with an entire text, it is a good idea to first have the students divide the text into sections. Each section can then be summarized. This can be done individually, in pairs, or in small groups during the lesson. Several samples of the students' text division and section summaries are put on the chalkboard and a class discussion ensues. It is also possible to have the students summarize sections of an article orally before doing so in writing. This activity involves what Taylor (1984:391) terms "analysis . . . that activity that occurs after the subject has read the words and that takes place primarily during the second or third reading of text." It is during analysis that the reader thinks carefully about what he/she has read so that important points are distinguished from details and examples.

Students need to be instructed about the importance of analyzing what they have read. They need to be made aware of the necessity of checking their ideas about the meaning of an article with the text itself. In other words, students must be sure that what they write in their summaries is an accurate representation of the author's meaning.

Students benefit greatly from these activities. They learn from practicing summarization skills, from discussing and analyzing their peers' work, from sharing problems, and from correcting and improving responses. They also become aware of their own abilities vis-à-vis summary writing and develop an understanding of how difficult a task it is.

Students frequently ask how long a summary should be and what should be included in it. These questions are related to the notions of conciseness and level of abstraction, which are themselves closely intertwined. Many teachers feel that a summary "should be about one-third the length of the original" (Taylor 1984:392). While this seems satisfactory, it does not answer the question of level of abstraction.

Level of abstraction refers to the amount and type of information a given audience requires. In the EFL class, the audience normally consists of a teacher, who is usually the only reader; it may, however, also consist of peers if summaries are written in pairs or small groups and then shared with the other class members. This audience knows the writer(s) fairly well. The teacher reads carefully in order to ascertain what the writer is saying and has learned in order to grade the summary fairly. In short, the summary is read closely and thoroughly, since the purpose of summary writing in a school setting is not to inform (as in the real world) but rather to demonstrate understanding and knowledge.

In the real world, the EFL professional faces a different audience. This audience includes people from various backgrounds who have different needs. Some may be experts who will study the summary or report in detail while others may skim and scan, looking only for the specific information with which they are concerned. Real-world audiences are frequently less interested in supporting details than are academic audiences. The former often prefer generalizations, as they are constantly under pressure and must read quickly under distracting conditions; they find that supporting details detract from their understanding of the subject (Huckin and Olsen 1984).

It is thus crucial that the teacher explain that level of abstraction depends primarily on the audience for whom the summary is being written. It is essential that students be given the opportunity to write different types of summaries so that they will be prepared for the real world.

Evaluation and grading

Students learn a great deal by comparing their work with their peers' work. Short summaries can be put on the chalkboard; longer ones can be compared and alternatives suggested. Students can explain which type of audience might be most interested in a particular summary. All students benefit from such an evaluation process, and the amount of learning that occurs is increased.

Class discussion of a positive nature, in an open and warm atmosphere, benefits everyone. Students should be encouraged to speak in terms of alternatives, to select the options they most like, and to suggest that other information is also important and should be included as well. The use of such positive expressions has its basis in humanistic educational theory. Each student feels that his/her ideas are important and that learning is a cooperative venture. This is in direct opposition to the usual evaluation process. In most class settings, evaluation of written work is a private matter, restricted to an oral and/or written exchange between teacher and student.

The teacher, too, needs to maintain an open mind and a positive attitude and to refrain from making judgments. Since judgments are not made, i.e., are left "open," students are encouraged to think and to make suggestions. Discussions and evaluation in such an atmosphere are relaxed and tension-free, and students are able to concentrate on the task at hand.

Grading is a requirement in most school settings. If the teacher follows the above procedures when grading, students will feel the summary they have written has some merit, at the very least. It is important to emphasize the positive aspects of the summary. This can be done in the margin or at the end of the summary. If the teacher's purpose is to encourage further writing, it is important that the student understand why the teacher has made specific suggestions concerning the need for additional or less information. Since this is usually not clear to the student, individual conferences should be scheduled by the teacher so that teacher and student comments, questions, and suggestions can be discussed after the summary has been graded.

Conclusion

The procedures described in this article can be used in any EFL or ESL class, assuming the students have attained the necessary level of competence in English. I have been following these procedures with EFL students of science and technology for the past three years. Student response has, on the whole, been positive, despite the fact that undergraduate students do not often have a clear idea of the job demands of their future profession. Student motivation has definitely been increased by the pre-summarization activities, class discussion, peer sharing of ideas and problems, and teacher-student conferences, as well as by the writing of different types of summaries for various real-world audiences. It should be noted, however, that summary writing as described here is time consuming; the planning, the organization, the grading, and the individual conferences require a teacher who is willing to devote a great deal of time to his/her students. It is, nonetheless, worth the effort if one's aim is to prepare EFL students of science and technology for professional life in the real world.

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Teaching the Speaking Skill

R. H. Kressel

Ministry of Education and Culture

Teachers of foreign languages are well aware that teaching learners to communicate orally in the foreign language, freely and correctly, is more difficult and more demanding than teaching other language skills. It is so difficult that many teachers feel they are getting nowhere, despite their efforts.

A situation out of control

Many teachers do oral work in the form of group or chain drills. The size of foreign-language classes being what it is (25–40 learners in a class), teachers conduct these drills while trying to keep all the youngsters occupied and happy so they won't tear the place apart.

Teachers often give students practice in individual oral production by having them perform "in front of the class." This can hardly be called communication; however, if a teacher does have students perform a dialogue or a talk as the next best thing to real communication, he finds he cannot give full attention to what the student is saying and how he is saying it. The teacher must keep the class quiet and—if possible—attentive. Most students do not like to listen to their peers. Some will be angry and jealous because others have been chosen to speak, some merely bored, especially since the average student's performance is less than inspiring. Therefore, they busy themselves with all kinds of things that are in no way connected with foreign-language study.

If under these circumstances the teacher is still able to listen to what is being said, he will, in most cases, hear all kinds of mistakes.

What is the teacher to do? If he interrupts the speakers, they will in most cases become upset and confused, and fluency will suffer. Moreover, there is not much chance that the performing student will be able to profit from corrections given under these conditions. If the teacher takes notes, trying to write down the mistakes, he is likely to miss much of what is being said and how. One way or the other, oral foreign-language production seems pretty much "out of control," and the teacher tends to know little about the quality of the oral performance of the average student in a large class.

Recording students' speech

If students are to improve their communicative performance, they must be trained to listen critically to themselves and realize what their strengths and weaknesses are. This might be feasible if conscientious teachers dealt with spoken performance as they do with their students' written work.

Oral production should be evaluated in all meaningful aspects: fluency, adherence to the topic, choice of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and intonation. This is feasible if at all stages of study students are instructed to record their oral work on a personal tape. A cassette tape should become part of every foreign-language student's equipment.

Recording students' oral work enables teachers to really listen to what has been said, taking into account all the aspects mentioned above, because they can do their listening in the teachers' room or at home, stopping the performance at will, listening more than once, etc. If students have no tape recorder at home, the teacher can have several of them record their work at school each time the class does oral group drills.

After listening to the pupils' work in the way described, the teacher will be able to evaluate their performance critically, to praise where praise is due, to suggest changes and correct mistakes. Every aspect should be given careful attention, and meaningful guidance supplied.

Points or grades might be given as follows:

30%—adherence to the set topic
30%—vocabulary choice
} fluency—60%
20%—grammar
20%—pronunciation and intonation

100%

It is obvious that the teacher's remarks are more important than marks or grades. They might be something like this:

The topic:

I liked the way you presented your subject. You made several important points. . . . You might also have commented on . . .

Vocabulary choice:

Please look up the meaning of the following words. . . . When you wish to say . . .

In a similar fashion teachers should comment on grammar, pronunciation, and intonation.

The students' tapes can and should be used to model the correct way to pronounce and intone, so students can listen to the teacher speaking to them from their own tapes. Also, students should be trained to listen to their own performance and become aware of their mistakes. They must get used to correcting their own performance, repeat a speech, reading, or dialogue, and compare their own performances.

Students' tapes can and should be used in class at the teacher's discretion. Fellow students can be instructed to pay attention to specific aspects of the material presented. Names can be withheld if this seems desirable.

Students can and should be asked to comment on good points as well as to point out mistakes. They can and should suggest ways to improve what they have heard.

Useful activities

To attempt all these things, oral training must begin at the earliest stages of foreign-language study. Teachers should devote time and thought to the preparation of visual aids, props, and games, all aimed at making their pupils "speak up."

Aided by these props, learners should be encouraged to make statements, ask questions, and tell stories; to act out dialogue situations concerned with everyday topics that are studied in foreign-language lessons. Reading aloud, used in this way, can be very useful too.

All these guided activities help students form the language habits they will need if at later stages they are to be able to express their needs and desires in appropriate ways.

Developing these language habits is bound to take a great part of the study time available, especially in the early stages. Students should be trained to speak in groups, deliver dialogues learned by heart, and engage in mim-mem exercises. They should also learn songs appropriate to their age levels, and there is an almost limitless supply of these. If all the devices mentioned so far are used for 15 to 20 minutes in each lesson, all the students will get a great amount of varied oral practice.

Language games should be a part of every foreign-language course. These games are a strong motivating device, requiring students to repeat known material over and over while enjoying the practice. Language games must be well taught, so that all learners are familiar with both the linguistic content and the rules of the game.

R. H. Kressel currently supervises the teaching of EFL in elementary and secondary schools for the Ministry of Education and Culture of Israel. During her 30-year teaching career, she has taught English as a foreign language at the elementary, secondary, and college levels. As part of Dr. Kressel's current duties she plans and conducts in-service courses for teachers and lectures at teacher-training institutions.

Some teachers object that these play periods are used by students for conversing in their first language, but when this happens it is usually because the students were not yet ready to play the game. Students should play in pairs or in small groups of four or a maximum of five players, ensuring maximal involvement of all participants. The teacher is free to walk about, listen to students, or join the fun.

Teachers who wish to get ideas concerning the teaching of games will find them in articles dealing with this subject contained in a special issue of *Forum* (*The Art of TESOL, Part 2*, Volume XIII, Nos. 3 and 4, 1975, pp. 295–309).

Drama and other "make-believe" activities are also an excellent way for students to use what they have learned in a meaningful way. Teachers who would like to refresh their memories or gain new ideas about this approach to spoken English will find valuable material and plenty of suggestions in *The Art of TESOL, Part 1*, pp. 158–73.

Countering some false assumptions

It is sometimes assumed that there is really no need to work so hard at making students talk, since the written code, once mastered, will be a major aid in enabling them to master the spoken word. However, this has not been verified, and there seem to be a number of reasons for this lack of transfer.

The written code is much more elaborate and explicit than the oral code can ever be. In oral communication, tone of voice, facial expression, gestures, and other aspects of "body language" play an important role in the transmission of messages. Moreover, most speakers use quite a lot of "fillers" or "hesitation noises" that slow down the speed of speech to enable them to organize, and frequently reorganize, their utterances in the process of everyday conversation.

Many teachers hope that being spoken to in the foreign language will enable their students to speak fluently in response. There is no evidence, however, that this happens in a majority of cases. What students do gain is the ability to understand the spoken language better.

In learning their first language, children do not acquire it solely by listening to other speakers, even though they hear the language for hours each day. In addition to listening, they speak a great deal themselves, and do this from an early age. They are constantly motivated by the attention paid to them by other speakers, and they improve their performance as they grow.

Providing situations for "free" conversation

Most foreign-language students, who must acquire the language in a country in which it is not spoken by many of the people in their immediate surroundings, lack both the opportunity and the motivation to use the language in prolonged meaningful speech acts.

Foreign-language teachers must not only devise such opportunities but also try to help their students bridge the gap between drills and guided activities and "free communication." In most normal communicative situations there is an information gap as well as an element of the unexpected. One can never really foresee what one is going to be told, even if one is only out shopping. This is why students must learn to really listen to what is being said by people they are talking to, and must get used to taking a meaningful part in the conversation. It is here that the teacher's comments are most useful.

Situations for these "free" conversations can and should be surprising as well as amusing. Teachers who are interested will find that there are many books in which ideas for these activities can be found. The taped material will provide teachers and students with plenty of substance to be listened to and evaluated, so that the students will be able to learn from their own mistakes.

Using the approach I have described is unlikely to completely bridge the gap between guided oral activity and free communication. Still, becoming aware of their own strengths and weaknesses will help at least some of the students to get nearer to the goal.

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ITALY

Writing at the Early Stages of Language Learning

CLARA HAHN

Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali, Rome

Under the heading of teaching writing we find a variety of exercises that go from copying a word, sentence, or paragraph to supplying missing parts or correct forms, to "guided" or "controlled" writing, to "uncontrolled" or "free" composition. Not unexpectedly, these exercises and much of what has been said about the teaching of writing, particularly at the early stages, reflect the various approaches to language learning.

For the purposes of this article, let's consider only the "free" or "uncontrolled" writing in which the learner composes in the language—that is, invents or creates sentences, paragraphs, or pages by himself. This does not mean he will be writing about complicated subjects in polished prose. It merely means that given whatever stimulation, suggestion, motivation, or assignment, the learner will be involved (intellectually and/or emotionally) and will do the composing on his own: it will be a subjective and creative activity. And he will be able, at least on the sentence level, to do it from the very early stages of his language study.

There are risks. At worst, there may be a complete breakdown in communication that triggers moments of frustration and discouragement. At best, from the very beginning of his language study the student can experience the potential of the new language to express as effectively as his first what he wants to say; and he comes to realize that as his grasp on the new language tightens he can be more precise in saying exactly what he means. Although we may believe that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages, and therefore the risks are worth taking, so many teachers (and texts) advocate tight control, *particularly* at the early stages, that we are obliged to ask why they do so and to look for explanations.

Why teachers like controlled writing

There may be many reasons. The very terms *controlled* and *guided* give a first clue, since they reflect a behavioristic rather than a cognitive approach to learning: the teacher (or text) is in charge, secure in the framework of an established order in the process of teaching/learning, protected from the unpredictable (and sometimes embarrassing) questions that arise when the learner is allowed greater freedom of expression.

Another explanation might be that we teachers have been brought up to give special respect to the written page. Unlike speech, it endures as lasting evidence, mistakes and all, so we have been conditioned to consider written errors more serious than oral ones. An oral error can be overlooked or corrected—and in any event fades into thin air. A written error becomes an indelible sacrilege. The visible error seems so much more serious than the invisible one that even a teacher who sees the value of overlooking errors in favor of communication in students' speech often fails to extend such flexibility to students' writing.

The value of students' auto-control

Despite the danger of a communication breakdown, it may be worthwhile to consider what can be gained from loosening the control on writing assignments. However, it is important not to confuse the issue of teacher (or text) control in guided writing exercises with the limitations learners impose on themselves. Learners are well aware that what they can say is restricted by their incomplete knowledge of the second language; but they do not all have the same limitations. Most of them exercise a kind of auto-control over what they write that reflects their personality as well as their interest and proficiency in the new language. For example, when we give students an open assignment to write sentences of their own using all the information they have at hand, and encourage them to experiment with what they have most recently learned in class and in areas where they have doubts, some will stick closely to what they have been given in class (that which they are most sure of); some will try to manipulate or vary it slightly; others will expand their range of topics by adding knowledge acquired elsewhere (e.g., words and expressions picked up from songs, films, or ads); still others will reach farther and experiment with vocabulary, forms, and structures; and a few may even reach so far beyond their knowledge that communication breaks down.

What students write provides useful information. In addition to the insights it gives into their personalities by revealing such traits as timidity, imagination, impatience to move ahead, and eagerness to experiment, it informs the teacher of the correct and incorrect information they have acquired elsewhere, reveals where they are having difficulty with what has been presented ("taught") in class, and offers clear indications of what they need or want to know; thus it also becomes a perfect guide to future lessons.

Clara Hahn taught English in New York City before going to Italy on a Fulbright fellowship. The switch from teaching native speakers of English to teaching nonnative speakers aroused an interest in language acquisition and eventually led to an M.A. in TESOL from New York University. For the last 12 years Ms. Hahn has been teaching English in the School of Economics at the Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali in Rome.

Some advantages of free writing

The advantages of uncontrolled writing are both psychological and practical. From the very beginning the learner becomes aware that, like his first language, the second language is creative, varied, and personal. It can be used to express his perceptions, realities, and points of view, even if only on a very simple descriptive level. When used precisely, it can say exactly what he intends, and by comparing his writing with that of others he becomes increasingly aware that there is rarely just one way to say something. Moreover, when he experiments with the language, he is intellectually involved in the process of his own learning. Since he knows what it is he is trying to say, feedback from classmates and the teacher tells him how successful he has been. As Tomlinson says (1983:14), "instead of waiting until they have learned to write, they write to learn"; and they are developing the "respectful self-consciousness about the process" (Clarke 1984:589) that experts in the field now consider so necessary (Elbow 1973; Barnes 1975).

If we viewed some of the problems that come up in writing as part of the exploration stage of the learning process, they might be easier to deal with. For example, many teachers maintain that breakdowns usually occur when students try to reproduce L_1 in L_2, so they avoid assigning free writing because the risk is that students will produce something that is incomprehensible to anyone who does not know the first as well as the second language. Though this is a very real problem, eliminating the creative aspect of writing may be too drastic a solution.

While we accept, and even depend on, the fact that learners will make use of their intelligence, imagination, and previously acquired knowledge in the language classroom, we sometimes choose to ignore that they also come to us already knowing a language and that the development of language and thought are closely connected (Vygotsky 1962; De Lisi 1981; Raimes 1983); and though we may never use L_1 in the classroom and try not to create situations where students are required to translate, if we expect them to experiment and reach in the new language, it seems realistic to accept that they will, at least occasionally, try in the new language what works in the one they know. It seems unrealistic to assume that learners will immediately sever all ties with their past (including language) merely because we counsel them to avoid translating.

Taking a creative approach to problems

Is there, then, any way to exploit a breakdown in communication and convert it into a learning experience? A possible answer seems to depend on first considering several other equally speculative questions. When do learners translate (consciously or unconsciously)? Does this provide useful information for the teacher? What happens to a learner when he has been unsuccessful?

If we accept that the thought process in L_2 is not necessarily dependent on L_1 and that learners do not always translate, we can then ask when it is that learners fall back on L_1, and we can speculate that it happens when they do not have enough control or information in L_2 to express themselves. If we ask what kind of learner translates, classroom experience tells us that when thinking (writing) is not tightly controlled there can be evidence of L_1 influence (translation) in the writing of both the insecure, fearful learner and the adventurous, ambitious one. In the former case, translation may indicate a poor grasp of something presented and/or a general reluctance to let go of L_1; in the latter, an eagerness to use what has been acquired elsewhere and/or an indifference to rules—a priority on communication rather than accuracy.

In either case, when these translations prove unsuccessful, the learners must deal with the failure. In a classroom where students are conscious from the very beginning of their studies that language is creative, and where they are encouraged to experiment, being told that something does not work in L_2 or is a translation from L_1 becomes feedback that is a natural part of the learning process rather than a criticism or reprimand. In this atmosphere learners come to accept the unexplainable and untranslatable features of L_2; and, if feedback consistently informs them that their use of L_1 is interfering with their progress, the insecure learner will begin to take small steps without the support of L_1, and the adventurous one, who may have been too ambitious and tried to run before learning to walk, discovers that some attention must be given to the special features of L_2. The teacher must strike the delicate balance between encouraging students to experiment in L_2 and informing and reminding them of the requirements and constraints of L_2 (i.e., what they can and cannot do in L_2, independent of L_1).

Therefore, a great deal depends on the teacher's attitude toward errors and correction—an important issue that can only be touched on here. We might generalize, however, and say that a teacher who has low tolerance for breakdowns and shares in the learners' frustrations rather than understanding them is not likely to loosen the guidelines that control errors. The teacher, too, must take risks; and while the learners are exploring the language, the teacher can be exploring the learning process. The teacher must, as Finocchiaro says (1983:68), "recognize that the correction of student errors is a matter requiring sensitivity and, above all, common sense. For example, when a student is expressing himself creatively he does not correct each error unless the error impedes comprehension." Does the teacher have to correct all errors just because they are on paper? Whether he does or not, these errors, because they are in writing, become a useful reference for the teacher in planning future lessons.

A plea for creativity

Learning a language is not as neat a process as teachers would like it to be, and so they try to tidy it up by carefully controlling input and production at the expense of experimentation. This is a high price to pay. While writing, in general, forces the learner to focus carefully on the language and to be precise and attentive to details (punctuation, spelling, etc.), writing on his own forces him, in addition, to take the initiative in producing language and to accept the responsibility for what he has produced. Might not the satisfaction derived from successful creative use of the language more than repay the learner for any confusion or frustration he encounters in the process?

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JORDAN

A Focused Efficient Method for Teaching Composition

OGLAH M. SMADI
Yarmouk University

Our students in the public schools of Jordan are expected by the end of their formal schooling to have acquired a competence in English that enables them to communicate orally with a native speaker of English over a wide spectrum of topics ranging from asking for directions to conversing about sports, and to write English passages that are grammatically correct, properly punctuated, and effectively organized (*English Curriculum for Secondary Stage*, 1971:19). In spite of these explicit, demanding goals, most of our students cannot use or understand English in normal communication, either spoken or written.

It is certainly true that the ability to compose grammatically correct sentences is not all that is needed in order to communicate. Most of our public school graduates know a great deal about English grammar and are able to translate from English to Arabic with the help of a dictionary, but they have not developed the practical ability to write an intelligible English passage.

It is my conviction that the students' inability to write a comprehensive, acceptable English passage is due mainly to the method used in teaching EFL in general and composition in particular. Teachers find it boring and tedious to correct many notebooks each week. Those who are interested try to give three to five topics a year, but even they rarely deal effectively with the students' compositions, being satisfied with marking in red all the grammatical and spelling mistakes in the students' compositions and putting a ✓ or a sign or giving a letter grade. The traditional method of teaching composition, at its best, does not go beyond putting a title on the chalkboard, providing the students with some pertinent ideas, and then letting them write their compositions. It is ludicrous to teach students almost nothing about composition writing for a whole year—or several years—and then ask them to sit for a composition test in the General Certificate Examination. Some of these students write down only the title; others write meaningless, incoherent pages.

A proposed method for teaching composition

The method I propose (Smadi 1983) I call the Focused Efficient Method (FEM).[1] The words *focused* and *efficient* here simply refer to the teacher's focus on previously determined objectives and the gradual progression from oral practice to the actual writing of the composition. Such a method can be used at the intermediate or advanced level of EFL.

Prerequisites for the FEM

To use this method effectively, the teacher must be enthusiastic about teaching composition, he must also be articulate and resourceful, since he is the initiator of the oral practice that precedes the students' writing. Further-

1. I have borrowed the name *Focused Efficient Method* from Knapp (1972); however, the technique is different from the method he proposes.

exam, he should have a list of the linguistic and stylistic objectives he wants his students to achieve by the end of the year or term. Such objectives may be determined with the help of a pretest or composition at the beginning of the year. After correcting the test, he can establish objectives according to the needs shown by the students' writing. He can plan the writing periods (one each week or one whenever) for the year or term in such a way as to meet these objectives. During each writing period, the teacher should concentrate on no more than four linguistic and stylistic objectives.

Topics to be given to the students to write on are preselected by the teacher and should have some relationship to their English curriculum. Students will be able to write more, and more effectively, on topics that relate to their linguistic and social background and are within their semantic repertoire (Winfield and Barnes-Felleh 1982).

Students must be trained in group work. This technique may be used even in classes with unmoveable desks. (A videotaped lesson in which group work plays an important part would be helpful for both teacher, and students.) The teacher must exercise a great deal of patience to overcome the difficulties that group work poses for both students and teachers.

The procedure

The procedure for teaching composition according to this method is as follows:

1. The teacher writes the title clearly on the chalkboard.

2. The teacher defines the objectives to be achieved during the class period and writes them on the chalkboard.

3. The teacher elicits ideas about the topic by asking questions and suggesting some points relating to the topic.

4. The teacher writes on the chalkboard in rough form the ideas suggested by the students.

5. The teacher rearranges the ideas according to their importance.

6. The teacher writes useful words and expressions on the chalkboard.

7. The teacher divides the class into groups (five to six students in each group), assigns a student as a leader of each group, and defines the leader's responsibility for rearranging the ideas, helping to organize the paragraphs of the composition, mediating between the group and the teacher, and being spokesman for the group.

8. Students begin to develop their compositions in their groups. The teacher moves among them, suggesting ideas and words, and answering questions.

9. When the students finish their compositions, notebooks are collected, to be corrected by the teacher.

Since graduating from the University of Texas at Austin in 1960, **Ghalib Ismail** has been an assistant professor of applied linguistics in the Department of Education at Yarmouk University in Jordan, he has been director of that department since September 1985. He has worked as a teacher, supervisor, and ESL guide in Jordan. Dr. Ismail has published papers in the area of first- and foreign-language acquisition and participated in a number of committees that developed ESL programs for teacher training seminars in Jordan.

10. The teacher corrects the students' compositions according to the objectives that have been set.

11. Some of the students read their corrected compositions in front of the class as examples of good writing and/or to point out errors that should be avoided.

12. The teacher prepares and conducts remedial practice on the common mistakes.

13. Students rewrite their corrected compositions.

Experimental evidence of the effectiveness of the FEM

A study was carried out to assess the effect of the FEM on the achievement of first secondary students (grade 10 in Jordan) in composition writing (Alawneh 1985). Eight sections (four for boys and four for girls) were randomly chosen and divided into two groups: four sections (75 boys, 88 girls) for the experimental group, and four sections (73 boys, 78 girls) for the control group. A pretest (a topic to write on) was given to both groups, and no significant difference was found between their means (Expt. $\bar{X}$ = 46.21; Cont. $\bar{X}$ = 41.86). The two groups proved to be homogeneous. The experimental group used the FEM, while the control group used the traditional method. The duration of the experiment was one semester. Both groups took the same post-test at the end of the experiment. The results of the study showed a significant difference in favor of the FEM ($F = 13.29$, Critical value for $F(1,310) = 3.90$).

Because of these promising results, another study is in progress on second preparatory students in Jordan (grade eight). The preliminary observations are quite encouraging.

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KUWAIT

Group Writing: A Technique That Fosters Creativity

SALWA ABDEL GHANI
Language Centre, Kuwait University

Doing the same task day after day can be extremely demotivating to students. Writing compositions, for example, especially in a foreign language, can become a boring task that they do because they have to and not because they feel that it is a process that should not only improve their language but also stimulate thinking and thus develop their cognitive abilities. Therefore, it is important to use various teaching techniques, which provide change and foster creativity.

Group writing is a technique that promotes creativity through discussion and peer-learning, and which at the same time provides a change that both students and teacher need in order to maintain interest and incentive.

This technique, which can be used with any level, consists of five stages, which take two class periods to cover. These include: preparing the information, brainstorming, working in small groups, writing, and evaluating.

Stage 1: Preparing the information

At the end of a class period students are provided with a topic to prepare for the next class. Preparing for this topic involves collecting information, the source of which depends on the nature of the topic as well as on the level of writing. The sources can be (*a*) personal experience, (*b*) imagination, (*c*) tables, diagrams, graphs, pictures of actual objects or events, (*d*) readings or any other sources.

The teacher can give students written instructions as to what is expected from them for the next session. This could include (1) preparing the information, (2) thinking about possible methods of development, and (3) the language needed.

Stage 2: Brainstorming

This stage takes approximately 20 minutes, during which students discuss the main ideas

as well as the supporting details they choose to include in their essays. Another point to discuss is the type or types of development they want to adopt, for example, development by definition, by comparison and contrast, by logical division, or by a combination of methods.

Discussing the types of development requires also a discussion of the transitions or connectors, as well as the kind of order (place order, time order), etc.

During the discussion the teacher should act as facilitator and record all ideas on the chalkboard without any evaluation or criticism. Evaluation should come last, because students gain insight from the group discussion and tend to modify their ideas. Thus, time should be allowed for their ideas to mature before any evaluation is given.

Students should be allowed to take notes to use later on, when the time comes for the actual writing.

To promote creativity, students should be encouraged to synthesize and evaluate information and also to include their personal feelings and opinions where appropriate. Questions like *how? what?* and *why?* should stimulate thinking and initiate ideas, if not during the brainstorming session, then after it.

It has been noticed that during the brainstorming session students tend to be less conscious of their English and concentrate more on the ideas, thus using English in a more natural, meaningful way. Also, it has been noticed that brainstorming sessions promote diversity, as opposed to the uniformity that teachers tend to foster, consciously or unconsciously. Essays written after a brainstorming session tend to be more individual and creative than those written without much discussion—the latter being almost identical, since they are written to meet what is "expected."

Stage 3: Working in small groups

After the brainstorming session, students are divided into groups of three to five each, depending on the size of the class. The members of each group may be selected according to various criteria. It is possible, for example, to group A students together, B students together, etc. Another choice is to have one good student who acts as a tutor in each group. It has been found, however, at least in Kuwait University, that students work better if they choose their own group. They tend to learn from each other, compromise, and develop a positive attitude towards each other's opinions.

As a group, and in light of the group discussion (brainstorming session), students should decide on the content and choose the type of writing and the methods of development for their essay. This should be translated into a rough plan, which they discuss with their teacher for feedback. Students then have one of three choices:

1. to prepare, individually, as homework, a full-note outline to write from during the next session;
2. to meet as a group outside the class and prepare a joint full-note outline; or
3. to assign one part to each member of the group to prepare.

Salwa Abdel Ghani teaches EFL courses at the Language Centre, Kuwait University, where she has also participated in developing course materials. She holds a B.A. in English literature and an M.A. in linguistics, and is working toward a Ph.D. in higher education. Ms. Ghani has also taught in Egypt and Libya. She is currently working on a research project whose aim is to maximize the learning abilities of university students by full utilization of language programs.

Stage 4: Writing

This part of the process takes place in the next class period. Students should be ready with their full-note outlines. They join their group, and either each member of a group writes a part or one person writes the whole essay from the notes and according to the joint plan, while consulting with the other members on every detail.

At this stage, emphasis should be on the correct use of the language, and coherence. It should be a joint effort, and the teacher should move among the groups to help and to make sure that all students are participating.

During the writing session each small group should serve as a learning center where students can consult with each other and with their teacher, especially on problems related to language use and coherence. Individualized teaching may be possible, depending on the needs of each group.

The writing step can be done by individual students without the group. That is, the discussion and the outline can be group work, but the actual writing from the outline can be an individual effort.

Stage 5: Evaluating

Writing the essays should not take more than 30 minutes. The teacher can then check the essays with each group and simply point out mistakes or circle them and leave them for the group to correct. The teacher can check other groups' essays while the members of the first group discuss and correct their mistakes. Thus, evaluation is postponed until the students have had more than one chance to perfect their work.

I have found that grammatical errors in articles, subject-verb agreement, prepositions, passive voice, etc., are corrected quickly by students. Problems related to the use of connectors and coherence are more difficult and require more work.

Since group writing is a joint effort, all members of the group get the same grade.

Problems

I have found that at least one student out of 20 does not work well in group situations and prefers to work alone. Although group writing should be a chance to change the student's attitude towards group work, his time could be wasted. To remedy this, the teacher must try to convince the student through conference to change his attitude. However, if the student shows no interest in trying, he must be allowed to work individually.

Another problem relates to time. Students may need a full hour to write the assignment. This means that the teacher cannot correct their papers during the session, and this delays the feedback. It is important, therefore, to plan a group writing session so that students get feedback during the session. It is important that students get as many chances as possible to perfect their writing before the final evaluation. This is reassuring, because students see that their mistakes can be minimized if they pay attention and revise their writing. It also helps them discover their weak areas and direct their attention to them.

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NETHERLANDS

A New Scholarly Journal

Second Language Research, a new international journal concerned exclusively with the theoretical aspects of second-language acquisition, began publication in June 1985. The purpose of the journal, which will be issued twice a year, is to provide a forum for investigators in the field of nonnative-language learning, and to promote interdisciplinary research which links acquisition studies to neighboring theoretical and experimental disciplines. According to its editors, J. N. Pankhurst and M. A. Sharwood Smith of the University of Utrecht, the journal will not only publish full-length articles and book reviews, but will also give readers "the opportunity to react to any of the ideas in the journal and to present to other readers, in short form, ideas which have not been fully developed or tested

...ous but which are considered worthy of a p...ic airing." The journal will concentrate on theory-oriented issues and will "maintain a strict 'non-applied' stance with respect to material accepted for publication."

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POLAND

Paraphrasing as an Aid to Writing

TADEUSZ RYBOWSKI
Institute of English,
University of Wrocław

It is amazing how difficult it is for students of foreign languages to write coherently. Most of them prefer speaking to writing, though some even find excuses for not taking an active part in conversation classes. With writing it is even worse. Many students complain that they do not know what to write about. They cannot link sentences into a coherent whole, nor can they express their thoughts in a lucid and organized way.

At the root of all this lies a very simple fact. The students do not know how to use a foreign language, either in speaking or in writing. Invariably they think in their own tongue when writing in English, and the results can be disastrous. Their papers contain many mistakes, and whole passages read like literal translations from Polish into English. The interference from the students' language is sometimes so great that the teacher has to ask them what they intended to say. The text resembles an abstract painting or a modern poem: Its message is unclear; it has to be guessed rather than understood.

Is there any way to eliminate, or at least lessen, the interference of the students' native tongue, that nightmare of all teachers of English? Can we teach the students to think in English while writing in this language? Or are we doomed to an endless process of editing our students' papers, with no improvement in sight?

There is no unequivocal answer to these questions. Some students can think logically, and their message, however distorted by interference from their own language, will get through. Others will go on writing in a confusing and long-winded way, irrespective of the teacher's efforts to make their writing more matter-of-fact and readable. Still, at least some ways of improving one's style—if not one's way of thinking—can be devised. One of these is paraphrasing an English text, taken from the handbook of English or some other piece of work by an English writer.

Tadeusz Rybowski is a senior lecturer in applied linguistics at the Institute of English of the University of Wrocław, where he teaches practical grammar, composition, and creative writing. He is also interested in translations of contemporary American and British poetry. At present Mr. Rybowski is working on translations of the poetry of Kenneth Rexroth and W. S. Merwin.

The question of creativity

Many teachers of English feel that paraphrasing a text is a waste of time; consequently, paraphrasing is seldom included in the curriculum for classes in writing. Such teachers seem to think that working on a text is beneath their dignity. The text is already written, so why bother about it? The students will not benefit from analyzing an alien text. Writing is a creative process, and creativity means making something out of nothing. When students write essays or letters, they are being creative; while paraphrasing a text they are following someone else's line of reasoning and thus remain internally passive. So goes the argument.

I would say that nothing is further from the truth. While we admit that paraphrasing a text is working on someone else's piece of writing, it is clear that even then one can be creative and innovative. Aren't translations of poetry and prose, to a certain extent at least, paraphrases of the original? And when we write a letter to someone, and then edit it—i.e., paraphrase it to make it more elegant—are we not being creative? Working on our own or another's text is a creative process in that we are supplying the form of expression, i.e., the language itself. It is true that we do not create something out of nothing, yet we do transform something, in this case a text in a foreign language, making it different from the original.

What to paraphrase

What texts are most likely to be suitable for paraphrasing and so should be given to the students to work on? They should probably be texts from the handbooks for advanced students, and not passages of literary prose or poetry. Many newspaper articles offer good material for paraphrases, with the exception perhaps of topical or editorial articles. Many interesting items can be found, for example, in the *New York Herald* or *The Times*. Texts used for paraphrasing should not be overloaded with idiomatic expressions that are difficult or impossible to paraphrase; they should contain simple but useful vocabulary, and be structurally interesting and diversified.

It seems advisable to start with shorter passages and then proceed to longer ones. As exercises on paraphrasing are intended to help the student with his original writing, the teacher should prepare a set of texts to paraphrase, no fewer than 10 for a semester. It is essential to choose interesting texts; if we begin with a text that is too long, dull, or difficult, it is all too easy to discourage the students about doing paraphrases.

How to paraphrase

It is essential that the teacher know how to introduce paraphrasing to the students. It is not enough just to dictate the passage. The teacher should take this opportunity to discuss the text. Difficult words and expressions should be fully explained and thoroughly understood. The text should be dictated slowly, but only once, to make the students more alert to the contents. All the gaps will be filled in during the second stage of work, when the teacher discusses the passage and explains it to his students.

The first model paraphrase should be thoroughly discussed in class. After discussing the text and explaining the more difficult and less known words and phrases, the teacher should explain to his students what they are expected to do. A paraphrase is first of all a transformation of the original text. This text is to be changed or restructured by replacing subordinate clauses by gerund constructions, passive voice by active voice and vice versa, tensed verbs by various types of the infinitive, etc. Long sentences can be split into shorter ones, and short sentences can be sensibly linked to constitute a larger whole. Some less important parts of the text can be left out altogether if this does not distort the general meaning of the passage. In principle, the paraphrased text should be similar in size to the original, but some deviations from that rule are acceptable. The students should be discouraged from relating the story in their own words, as this often leads to oversimplification of content and results in errors that would otherwise have been avoided. Any departure from the original content and form must be reasonably motivated and justified.

In addition to structural paraphrase, the student is expected to demonstrate his potential vocabulary. Thus, he should be encouraged to introduce synonyms or even whole phrases that fit the context. Though paraphrasing is usually done in class, the student should not be permitted to use a dictionary, but should be required to draw upon his own word resources. This stimulates him to greater effort. He must find the words, phrases, and expressions that best fit the context. There can be no guessing or intuitive search for words.

Not all parts of the original text can be

paraphrased. Some of them must be retained. Therefore, the student should be advised not to paraphrase everything at all costs, as the paraphrase should express the content of the original. The student must keep in mind that the end product should be a new text as far as form is concerned, but that the content should remain basically the same. All that he is expected to do is to choose alternate ways of expressing the ideas and thoughts contained in the original.

It is essential that the paraphrased text should read more or less like a genuinely English piece of writing. It is not always possible to avoid artificiality in a paraphrase, and some parts of the text, though grammatically and lexically correct, will sound unidiomatic, even strange. This, unfortunately, is the price we must pay for manipulating structures and words, yet this price seems worth paying.

A sample paraphrase

Let me now substantiate the above remarks by a paraphrase that I consider quite successful. The text to be paraphrased has been taken from *Developing Skills*, by L. G. Alexander (Longman).

Original Text

It has never been explained why university students seem to enjoy practical jokes more than anyone else. Students specialize in a particular type of practical joke—the hoax. Inviting the fire brigade to put out a non-existent fire is a crude form of deception which no self-respecting students would ever indulge in. Students often create amusing situations which are funny to everyone except the victims.

When a student recently saw two workmen using a pneumatic drill outside his university, he immediately telephoned the police and informed them that two students dressed up as workmen were tearing up the road with a pneumatic drill. As soon as he had hung up he went over to the workmen and told them that if a policeman ordered them to go away they were not to take him seriously. He added that a student had dressed up as a policeman and was playing all sorts of silly jokes on people. Both the police and the workmen were grateful to the student for this piece of advance information.

The student hid in an archway nearby where he could watch and hear everything that went on. Sure enough, a policeman arrived on the scene and politely asked the workmen to go away. When he received a very rude reply from one of the workmen he threatened to remove them by force. The workmen told him to do as he pleased and the policeman telephoned for help. Shortly afterwards, four more policemen arrived and remonstrated with the workmen. As the men refused to stop working, the police attempted to seize the pneumatic drill. The workmen struggled fiercely and one of them lost his temper. He threatened to call the police. At this, the police pointed out ironically that this would hardly be necessary as the men were already under arrest. Pretending to speak seriously, one of the workmen asked if he might make a telephone call before being taken to the station. Permission was granted and a policeman accompanied him to a call-box. Only when he saw that the man was actually telephoning the police did he realize that they all had been the victims of the hoax.

Paraphrase

Curiously enough, university students seem to enjoy practical jokes more than other persons. The hoax is a particular kind of practical joke students specialize in. No self-respecting student would ever indulge in such a crude form of deception as, for instance, inviting the fire-brigade to extinguish a non-existent fire. Funny situations created by students are amusing to everybody but the victims.

Some time ago two workmen were using a pneumatic drill outside the university. Having seen this, a student telephoned the police right away to tell them that the road was being torn up with a pneumatic drill by two students dressed up as workmen. He had no sooner hung up than he came up to the workmen to inform them that they should not take seriously a policeman wanting them to go away, because a student dressed up as a policeman was playing silly jokes on people. Both the police and the workers were much obliged for this advance information.

To watch and hear everything that went on, the student hid in an archway nearby. After a few minutes a policeman went over to the workmen and asked them to go away. Having heard a very rude remark from one of the workmen, he threatened to remove them by force. Yet, the workmen told him to do as he wished, so the policeman telephoned for help. Shortly afterwards four more policemen arrived to remonstrate with the workmen. Since the men did not want to stop working, the police tried to seize the pneumatic drill, and, after a fierce struggle, one of the workmen lost his temper. As he threatened to call the police, a policeman stated ironically that this would hardly be necessary as the men were already arrested. One of the workmen asked if he might telephone before being taken to the police station. When a policeman saw that he was actually telephoning the police, he came to the conclusion that they all must have been victims of the hoax.

The author of the paraphrase has made several important changes in the text. They can be roughly divided into structural and lexical changes. Structural changes consist mainly of changes in word order. Objects of the sentence become their subjects, with all the consequences resulting from such an operation. Some sentence structures, however, remained intact, the only changes being of the lexical type. Several sentences were considerably shortened without distorting the contents of the whole. Less essential parts of the text were left out altogether, but on the whole the size of the text has remained about the same as the original. The student has also attempted to replace certain words by their synonyms (*amusing/funny, grateful/obliged, pointed out/stated, realized/came to the conclusion*, etc.).

On the whole, the paraphrased text reads well. As it is slightly shorter than the original, it has been made more concise and lucid. As the new version contains no evident departures from the original, there are no passages that require further explanation or comment. It is evident that the student really did some work on the text without trying to relate it in his own words. There is also no interference from his own language, as he did not have to do any thinking in that language while working on the text.

Some of the changes may seem a bit mechanical, but this is by no means regrettable. Paraphrases are meant to be mechanical, as this is the very essence of the process of paraphrasing. We might wish, though, that the student had shown a little more ingenuity and attempted a riskier approach to the text.

The place of paraphrasing

Summing up, it should be stressed that paraphrases will never replace creative writing. Paraphrases should be treated as solid assistance in writing and not as a substitute for it. I recommend them highly for first- and second-year students of English, but would use them only occasionally with advanced students. Teaching paraphrases can be compared with teaching practical grammar. The former is supposed to teach coherent writing, while the latter helps the students speak fluently—and correctly. Both are essential for serious study of a foreign language. ■

SAUDI ARABIA

Word Processors and the Teaching of Writing

RORY MCGREAL
University of Petroleum and Minerals, Dhahran

Second-language (L_2) teachers who have experimented with word processors are considering their possible applications in the teaching of writing skills. The word processor, with its powerful capabilities for text editing, can serve as the device par excellence for promoting the effective learning of the mechanics of good writing. Studies of students learning to write in their native language tend to confirm

that the revision process is improved significantly when they use word processors. The computer also induces that feeling of detachment and objectivity which good writers so often need in criticizing and perfecting their compositions. Furthermore, the ease of correction on the word processor encourages students to experiment with words and learn from their mistakes.

A tool for revision

Good writing involves a constant interplay of thinking, writing, and rewriting. Revision must become an integral element of the writing process. Zamel's (1983) study of L_2 students learning to write showed that the good writers constantly revised as they wrote, while the poor writers avoided rereading and rewording their compositions.

In their studies of native speakers of English learning to write on word processors, Arms (1982), Daiute (in Collins 1983), and Fisher (1983) all noted that learners made substantive as well as mechanical revisions on the word processor. Nevertheless, Gerrard (1983:19) commented that students were "more likely to revise for mechanical errors than for more sweeping changes in content, organization, or style."

However, as L_2 teachers, we are less concerned with training professional-quality writers than are the teachers of native speakers. Our aim is more modest: to turn out moderately proficient writers in the target language. The word processor, with its mechanical aids influencing the revision process, seems to be well suited for aiding poor writers, at the beginning levels, to get a grasp of the form and structure of the language.

On the word processor revision is no longer a chore filled with the mindless recopying of whole paragraphs and pages to accommodate minor errors. The word processor is an excellent tool for promoting revision as an integral aspect of creative writing. For too long viewed as a punishment by generations of students, revision can now be a source of amusement. As Papert (1980) suggested, revision becomes a "debugging" exercise, which is aimed at eliminating "bugs"[1] that have crawled into a program, and not a search for errors that the student has made.

A useful detachment

The sense of distance from their errors felt by students using word processors has been noted by researchers (Gerrard 1983, Watt 1984). Learners felt more objective toward their compositions both on the screen and on the printouts. This altered perception allowed students to judge their writing from another, more detached, point of view. Revisions tended to reflect this.

Watt (1984) pointed out that because the microcomputer is so impersonal, there is no embarrassment on the part of the users when they make mistakes. One of Gerrard's (1983:24) students commented that "the essay seemed less like something I wrote myself, when shining at me on an illuminating screen."

Furthermore, because of the impersonality of the microcomputer, students are willing to accept far more criticism. Although it is nonhuman, it is not perceived as being inhumane. Smith (1983), having become weary of the proliferation of "user friendly" courseware that continually praised the student, created a "user unfriendly" program that insulted the learners. Rather than upsetting the users, it became one of the most popular programs.

This sense of impersonality and detachment even extends to peer criticism, as was noted by Arms (1982), whose students freely consulted each other in making substantive as well as cosmetic revisions. Moreover, Gerrard's (1983) students were able to access each others' files at the terminal, and correct papers or leave comments on the screen.

Serendipitous learning

Having freed the learners from the mundane and repetitive tasks associated with revision, the word processor can also relieve the students of their anxiety over the correctness of their compositions. This frees them to experiment with words. Collier (1982:12) observed that the word processor promotes "surprise, innovation and serendipitous learning."

The ease with which one operates a word processor encourages writers to explore and experiment while revising their texts. These explorations often lead to chance discoveries of better ways of expressing ideas and concepts. The serendipity factor comes into play. Creative problem-solving is stimulated when the act of playing with words becomes an enjoyable activity. It is fun to write on a word processor, so learners tend to spend more time amusing themselves with words, allowing the serendipity factor to affect their writing. Learners experience a magical delight in blasting unwanted words out of existence and packing blocks of text and transporting them around a composition. For L_2 teachers, then, the word processor can be exploited as a powerful tool for teaching. As microcomputers become more widely available in our learning institutions, we can capitalize on their word-processing capabilities by using them in the teaching of writing skills.

1. *bug*: an unexpected defect, fault, flaw, or imperfection. —*Webster*

Rory McGreal teaches EFL at the English Language Center of the University of Petroleum and Minerals, Dhahran. He has a B.A. in Russian and history from McGill University and an M.A. in applied linguistics from Concordia University, both in Montreal. Previously, he was chairman of the English Second Language Program at the National Youth Service, Port Launay, Seychelles. He has also taught ESL to Naskapi Amerindians and French Canadians in northern Quebec. Mr. McGreal is now developing text-adventure computer games for EFL learners.

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SPAIN

An Imaginative Approach to Teaching Writing

CARMEN MANUEL CUENCA
I. B. Segorbe, Castellón

RODRIGO FERNÁNDEZ CARMONA
I. B. Xàtiva, Valencia

Mindful of the fact that one of the most important ingredients in learning to write in a foreign language is *motivation*, we have experimented in our classes with a wide range of exercises from a very useful source: Gianni Rodari's *Grammatica della Fantasia: Introduzione all'arte di inventare storie* (Torino: Piccola Biblioteca Einandi, 1973). Rodari provides a list of recipes and concoctions for developing writing practice. Some of his ideas have already been tested (see Rinvolucri's *Once upon a Time*, pp. 93–96), but we have tried to test all of his ideas, and can say that these experiments with intermediate students

have been successful. We believe the reasons for their success are these:

The exercises have been devised to motivate the students to use and improve their writing skills.

Most of them are done as pair work or group work, which facilitates communication between the students.

The exercises usually consist of two or three parts, so that they are not too long and boring. The students must do the first part well in order to accomplish the second.

Most important of all, they require the students to exercise imagination.

The exercises require the students to establish relationships between concepts, ideas, and words outside of normal use, which forces them to review their primary use. This is a further semantic step.

All these reasons can be summed up in one: the exercises are an *imaginative approach* to teaching varieties of writing.

A sampling of exercises

To show what these exercises are like, we will describe some of them, adding illustrative examples where necessary.

1. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF . . . ?

Preparation: None

Organization: Individual/pair work

Procedure: Tell the students to write a composition using one of the following ideas:

1. . . . if a crocodile came into the class to study English?
2. . . . if one day we found the streets in our city covered with grass and flowers?
3. . . . if I invited an Extraterrestrial to have lunch at home?

Tell the students to invent new ideas if they don't like the ones you have given them.

Grammar: Conditional sentences (second type)

2. COMPLETE THE POEM

Preparation: Give the students several first lines of poems

Organization: Pair work

Procedure:

Step 1. The students must choose one of the first lines and, using it, write a complete poem of whatever length they wish.

Step 2. The students read the poems aloud to the class, and then choose the best ones. You can display these on the wall.

3. RIDDLES

Preparation: None

Organization: Group work

Procedure:

Step 1. Tell the students to write a riddle according to the following instructions:

1st line: Define an object as if you were seeing it for the first time.

Carmen Manuel Cuenca teaches English in a state secondary school in Segorbe, Castellón. She graduated from the University of Valencia (English, German, and Italian philology), where she is also doing postgraduate work in the history of the English language. **Rodrigo Fernández Carmona** also teaches English in a state secondary school in Xátiva, Valencia. He graduated from the University of Valencia (English and German philology). Mr. Fernández is a member of the Shakespeare Institute in Spain and is doing postgraduate work in English literature.

2nd line: Describe the object by comparing it with something you know.

Step 2. When the students have written their riddles, they ask the rest of the class to guess what it is.

Example:

It has two circles with two eyes on them. It looks like a bike. (Answer: a pair of glasses)

4. CHAINED NONSENSICAL STORIES

Preparation: Prepare a list of questions with the verb tense that you want to practice. For example:

Who was she/he/it?
Where was she/he/it?
What was she/he/it doing?
What did she/he/it say?
What did she/he/it say to the people?
How did the story finish?

Organization: Group work

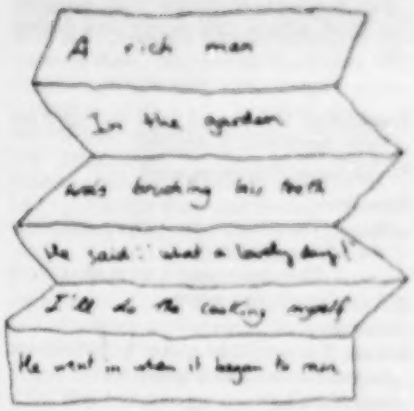
Procedure:

Step 1. Have each student take a sheet of paper. Ask the questions listed above one at a time. After the students have answered the first question, they should fold up their sheets so that the answer is hidden, and then pass their paper along to another student. Then have them write an answer to the second question, fold the paper to hide the answer, and pass it along as before. Continue in this way until all the questions have been answered. Each student should answer the questions according to the original idea s/he had when answering the first question.

Step 2. Have each student unfold the sheet that s/he has at the end, and write a short story by joining the sentences into a paragraph (even though it apparently makes no sense) on a new sheet of paper.

Step 3. Have the students read the "stories" aloud and choose the funniest or most nonsensical one.

Example


A rich man
In the garden
was brushing his teeth
He said: "what a lovely day!
I'll do the cooking myself
He went in when it began to rain

A rich man was in the garden brushing his teeth. He said: "What a lovely day!" And then he said to the other people: "I'll do the cooking myself," and he went in when it began to rain.

5. WELL-KNOWN STORIES TOLD THE OTHER WAY AROUND

Preparation: None

Organization: Individual/pair work

Procedure: Tell the students to think of a well-known traditional story (e.g., Cinderella), and have them write a composition, giving the characters values exactly opposite to those they have in the real story: the wicked characters become the good ones, and vice versa.

6. AND THEN WHAT HAPPENED?

Preparation: None

Organization: Individual/pair work

Procedure: Tell the students to think of a well-known traditional story (e.g., Cinderella, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, Bluebeard, Little Red Riding Hood, etc.), and have them write a composition starting where the traditional story ended.

7. THE BEGINNING OF A STORY

Preparation: None

Organization: Individual work

Procedure: Give the students the beginning of a story (e.g., "Last week I went to visit Frankenstein . . .") and tell them to complete the story.

8. PICTURE COMPOSITION

Preparation: None

Organization: Pair work

Procedure:

Step 1. Tell the students to draw a picture. Two students must draw on the same sheet, and neither of them has to take into account what the other has drawn.

Step 2. Each one must write a composition describing the final picture.

Step 3. They must discuss which composition better reflects their picture, and explain why.

9. CREATIVE ERRORS

Preparation: Provide the students with a list of their own errors, if possible.

Organization: Pair/group work.

Procedure:

Step 1. The students must give a definition of the new word (error).

Step 2. They must write a short story using at least five creative errors.

Example:

a three (*for a tree*) = a tree that stands between a second and a fourth tree

a legg (*for a leg*) = a leg with two feet

a buk (*for a book*) = a book in which all the words start with "u"

bluetiful = something beautiful and blue

10. CHOOSE THE PREFIX

Preparation: Prepare a sheet with different prefixes. Make as many photocopies as there are groups in the class, and cut them out.

Organization: Group work.

Procedure:

Step 1. Tell the students to write down simple nouns (e.g., *pen, nose, bed, book, dog, house*, etc.). They must then randomly combine the prefixes with the nouns. They should then write down a list of the new words.

Step 2. Have the students give a definition of each new word.

Step 3. Have them write a short story containing as many of the new words as possible.

Prefixes that can be used: *super-, mini-, maxi-, micro-, uni-, non-, inter-, poly-, un-, bi-, anti-, tri-, extra-, dis-, pre-, post-.*

Example:

unpen = a pen without ink

non-nose = a man who has a big hole in the middle of his face

antifood = hamburgers, hot dogs, junk food in general

bihouse = a house with two roofs

triteacher = a teacher who teaches three subjects

11. NEWSPAPER HEADLINES

Preparation: Cut out some headlines from a newspaper and photocopy them.

Organization: Group work.

Procedure:

Step 1. Hand out a photocopy to each group. The students must mix up the words in the headlines to make funny new headlines. They are acceptable if they are grammatically correct.

Step 2. After the students have written the new headlines, they must write a piece of news to go with one of them.

Conclusion

Our aim in writing this article has been to offer a variety of simple resources to English teachers who consider their students' creativity extremely important. Nearly all of the exercises we have shown can be applied to all levels, although they will have to be adapted to take into account the grammatical structures, words, and expressions appropriate for the particular students.

We have given no indication as to the length of time for each exercise, because we think that depends on several variables: the number of students, the duration of the lesson, the different levels within the same group, etc.

Since writing has always been the hardest skill for our students to develop, they have found with this new approach a way of enjoying their own compositions while at the same time having fun. ■

THAILAND

Dictation: Easy and Accurate Evaluation of "Co-Co"

DONALD E. BOTT
Bangsaen, Cholburi Campus

VALLIPUN SATITHYUDHAKARN
Patumwan, Bangkok Campus, Srinakharinwirot University

Large English classes can be trained and tested in an important area of communicative competency, or "co-co" (Ridjanović 1983:9),[1] by nonnative English teachers who may themselves lack oral proficiency. This dictation method has been developed (Bott 1982)[2] for secondary teachers of English who are able to start, play, and stop a tape recorder, ask questions about the contents of an L_2 passage, and drill L_2 structures and pronunciation of difficult words and phrases with the aid of the tape. It is a viable alternative to wasting class time with badly made multiple-choice tests or lectures about L_2 in L_1, procedures now abandoned by progressive teachers and systems in favor of the "communicative approach" (Heron 1983).

Dictations are "integrative tests" that "have been established by a large body of research" as being "more reliable and valid than discrete-point tests" (Oller 1976:26). As one of the oldest language learning-testing techniques, dictation should not be ignored amid the clamoring claims of "modern" techniques.

"A person who is not trained in the technicalities of developing multiple-choice tests can easily make serious errors when he attempts to construct adequate so-called discrete-point tests of the multiple-choice type" (Oller 1976:22). This warning is for most classroom English teachers, and our only alternative is to treat language as it is in communication—a whole. Dictations do this. They also help students to feel that the L_2 is being learned sensibly, so this "face validity" complements the scientific validity and reliability of the technique.

Since dictations "give" vocabulary, word order, and grammatical structures, they seem simple to persons who have "internalized" the language. But what is obvious to a fluent user of a language "must be *discovered by a process of inference*" (Oller 1976:24) by L_2 learners. Spelling is not given away if the passage is dictated at a near-normal rate and mode of enunciation.

Pre-test

In order to determine the needs of students, a diagnostic test—which should not be recorded for determination of course grade—will indicate several "target areas" to be dealt with in instruction. A number of commercially available dictation tapes follow the usual procedure, which is

> to read the dictation three times: first, straight through at a fairly conversational rate to give the examinees an overview of the passage and its contents; a second time with pauses at appropriate phrase boundaries (usually every four to seven words); and a third time again at a conversational rate to give students an opportunity to make corrections. (Oller 1976:24)

The following example is modified from the first lesson of an English text for intermediate students, so the phrase boundaries (indicated by / and //) are more numerous than they would be for a higher level. Even though its topic may be outside the students' experience, it is a suitable test for students never before given a dictation:

> A smile / goes with / a greeting, / but is not / by itself / a polite way / to say "hello." // You must speak. // There are / several usual ways / that native speakers / do it. // The words / and phrases / can be put / into three classes: / formal, / informal, / and casual. // Your own language / has such classes. // (Bott 1984)

The dictation is taped by a native speaker, played by the instructor, and the papers are given to the instructor after students have finished checking their work. To provide incen-

1. Ridjanović says, "I think that the whole co-co business is a lot of hogwash." The classroom experience of the authors tends to prove that no methodology, approach, or "business" should be completely cast aside; even the grammar/translation and the aural/oral methods yield techniques answering students' needs.

2. After presentation at a ThaiTESOL workshop in April of 1982, Vallipun continued to develop this dictation method at demonstration-school classes. In its present form, many secondary English teachers have adopted it as an effective approach to solving students' difficulties with oral English.

Donald E. Bott taught high school in Texas before going to Thailand. After spending three years with the Peace Corps there, he served in several other teaching positions. He taught at Srinakharinwirot University, Chonburi, until recently. **Vallipun Sutthiyuddhakara** has been an instructor in the English Department at Srinakharinwirot University, Patumwan campus, since 1981. Ms. Vallipun earned a B.A. and B.Ed. from Chulalongkorn University and an M.A. in instructional media from the California State University at Long Beach.

tive, the news that "this test doesn't count" is kept secret.

Though there are less than 50 words in this sample dictation, only one-half point is subtracted per error. This provides ease in scoring with only a negligible disadvantage for students.

Training

Three major modifications have been instituted in transforming this standard procedure for testing a large class to training a large class:

1. After the first play-through the teacher asks comprehension questions (usually in L_1) and conducts pronunciation/repetition drills of difficult words and phrases in the dictation.

2. During the second play-through the tape may be repeated as students request.

3. After the third play-through, which also includes punctuation, the students write the dictation on the board, correcting each other. The instructor chooses which students are to write which phrases, and most often "weaker" students (as shown by the pre-test) are chosen for this chore.

As an ungraded activity in which the entire class participates and cooperates, this training illustrates that peer pressure more than compensates for the absence of instructor approval/disapproval. Once-sluggish students show marked improvement when this technique is used.

Such practice dictations are best taken from previously studied passages in L_2 textbooks, so that structure, vocabulary, idioms, and pronunciation are familiar. But even after such a "known" dictation has been written on the board, the teacher should exploit the vocabulary and grammar of the passage through drills. This "overlearning" helps students understand a lesson better.

The following sample "training" dictation is taken from the same text as the pre-test, but from a later unit:

> You need to know / how to agree or disagree / with the statements of others / as simply and honestly / as possible. // Not saying anything / when people talk to you / is impolite, / and agreeing with them / to whatever they say / is dishonest. // It's better / to disagree politely, / if you do, / than to keep quiet / or to agree / all the time. // (Bott 1984)

After the first play-through, the instructor asks comprehension questions. Competent L_2 speakers may elect to use the target language in asking and having students answer, but this is not necessary: the L_1 is a useful means for making sure that students understand the contents of the passage and are not just parroting words and phrases from it.

Simple (yes/no) questions should be used first in this part of the technique to build up the students' confidence:

1. Should you know how to agree and disagree? (Yes, you should.)
2. Is it impolite to keep quiet in a conversation? (Yes, it is.)
3. You shouldn't agree all the time, should you? (No, you shouldn't.)
4. What is disagreeing politely better than doing? (Keeping quiet or agreeing all the time.)
5. What do you need to know how to do? (Agree and disagree.)
6. How should you do it? (As simply and honestly as possible.)
7. Why shouldn't you keep quiet? (It's impolite.)
8. Why shouldn't you agree all the time? (It's dishonest.)
9. How should you disagree, if you do? (Politely.)
10. So what are two things you shouldn't do? (Keep quiet or agree all the time.)

If the answers have been elicited in L_1, they can be translated to L_2 at the time of the pronunciation drill as given on the tape. Structure drills such as these should occupy less than 10 minutes of class time:

What do we need to { know? / study? / say? / do? }

We know { how to do it. / where it is. / what to do. / when to come. }

We do it as { politely / quietly / fast } as possible.

Whatever they { say / do / think / want } is wrong.

These drills should be transformed to and from third-person singular, present tense to allow practice of /-s/ and /-z/. Though the value of drills decreases with the increase of time spent on them, they are more effective than explaining a grammar point without practice.

Analysis of the errors occurring in the pre-test will have provided the instructor with several "target areas" at which to aim dictation training, particularly end-sounds such as /-s/ and /-z/. Though these may be vital to the understanding of L_2, they are often ignored by learners because L_1 lacks them.

Pronunciation practice with words containing problem sounds seems to make easier the task of hearing similar words, an apparent reversal of the principle laid down by Lado and others that listening is basic to all language skills. The authors have been led to the tentative conclusion that all skills are interrelated with each other.

Post-test

This test provides a grade to be recorded, the only one taken in the program. This sample is again from *English Conversation*, this time a little-used supplementary lesson:

> "Shall" is used in two ways / in modern English. // It can express strong determination, / or it can— / particularly in a "tag" question— / ask permission. // In most cases, / "will" can be used. // "Shall" is no longer / automatically used, / if it ever was, / with first person / singular and plural. // (Bott 1984)

Post-test dictation is given in the same way as pre-test. Even though the post-test is more difficult—heavier vocabulary load and fewer phrase boundaries—grades show overall improvement. Further error analysis reveals other "target areas" for another dictation series.

Conclusion

Dictation tests no single "skill"; but neither does communication consist of less than a combination of the language elements long ago identified as listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

All experienced writers read over what they write in order to correct it. This is the same as stage number three of a dictation, in which students check their work. From the fact that students move their lips while reading over their dictations, the instructor may (reluctantly) conclude that reading is speaking as well. Speaking-skill quality determines final accuracy in putting down what is heard in a dictation.

The method here described is constrained by three factors:

1. The limited availability of native speakers trained to give dictations. This problem is circumvented by buying commercial dictation tapes or having a native-speaker (after read-

ing this article) make a tape.

2. *Large classes.* The teaching techniques described above gives students an opportunity to cooperate in a class, a large group. In addition to keeping a high interest level, they provide a humanistic element which is most important: an opportunity to work collectively, thus developing self-discipline.

3. *Some teachers.* L$_2$ teachers may have limited oral ability in English. This comment is not a condemnation of secondary L$_2$ teachers; it is merely an attempt to work within the present situation.

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■

International Conference in Bangkok

Chulalongkorn University Language Institute is hosting an international conference in Bangkok, December 9–11, 1986. The topic of the conference is "Trends in Language Program Evaluation," and the themes to be discussed are approaches to evaluation, program design, use of quantitative tests, quality evaluation, and practical approaches and implementation on program evaluation. Speakers will include regional experts and experts from the United States and Great Britain. For more information please write to:

Chulalongkorn University
Language Institute
Prem Purachatra Building
Phyathai Road
Bangkok 10500, Thailand

UNITED STATES

Fun with Two-Word Verbs

CHARLES WUKASCH
St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas

DONALD BOUCHARD
Westbrook College, Portland, Maine

The following is intended to be a "fun" exercise with two- and three-word verbs. The exercise can be used in class or as a homework assignment. The teacher can ask the students

Charles Wukasch has taught ESL, linguistics, and foreign languages at several universities and has held Fulbright lectureships in Yugoslavia and Poland. He is currently teaching German at St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas. **Donald L. Bouchard** is currently director of international Graduate Programs at Westbrook College, Portland, Maine. He has served as English teaching advisor for the United States Information Agency, Fulbright TEFL lecturer to Yugoslavia, and bilingual reading specialist.

(to see whether they were merely guessing) to paraphrase the sentences. For example, in pair 14, the student could say "Brenda phoned her friends" and "Sandra visited her friends." The teacher should also point out any differences in usage (e.g., *to call up* is separable, whereas *to call on* is inseparable). If the students enjoy the exercise, the teacher can create additional pairs with other two- and three-word verbs.

So, don't *put off* this exercise by *putting it away* for use at some future date. *Put* the students *to work* right now. If a student misses an answer, don't *put* him or her *down*. After all, students have to *put up with* a lot of frustration in learning English. Finally, I'm not *putting* you on when I say that teaching two-word verbs can be fun.

1. *a.* John cut his finger.
   b. Bob cut his finger off.
   Which man won't become a watchmaker?
2. *a.* Susan put away her toys and went to bed.
   b. Joe put down his toys and went to bed.
   Which child is neater?
3. *a.* He went into his orchard and picked some apples.
   b. He went into his orchard and picked up some apples.
   In which case had the apples already fallen from the tree?
4. *a.* Whenever Sam plays chess, he always beats his opponent.
   b. Whenever Jack plays chess, he always beats up his opponent.
   Which of the men has a very bad temper?
5. *a.* I talked Jane into attending the party.
   b. I talked Linda out of attending the party.
   Which of the two women attended the party?
6. *a.* George ran across some valuable books.
   b. Tom ran away with some valuable books.
   Which of the two men is a thief?
7. *a.* The babysitter spent all afternoon looking after the children.
   b. The babysitter spent all afternoon looking for the children.
   In which case had the babysitter not paid attention to her work?
8. *a.* Tim has cut out cigarettes.
   b. Bill has cut down on cigarettes.
   Which of the two men now smokes two packs of cigarettes a day instead of three?
9. *a.* The officials put off the game until the rain stopped.
   b. The officials put up with the game until the rain stopped.
   Which game was played in the rain?
10. *a.* Dan put his clothes in the kitchen.
    b. Frank put on his clothes in the kitchen.
    Which man got dressed in the kitchen?
11. *a.* Sally blew out the candles.
    b. Jan blew up the candles.
    Which woman is crazy about explosives?
12. *a.* John turned off the lights before leaving the office.
    b. George turned on the lights before leaving the office.
    Which man had been working in the dark?
13. *a.* Joe looked over the new vocabulary before starting his reading.
    b. Bob looked up the new vocabulary before starting his reading.
    Which man used the dictionary?
14. *a.* Sandra called on all her friends in Europe.
    b. Brenda called up all her friends in Europe.
    Which woman had a big long-distance telephone bill?
15. *a.* Susan never talks to her parents.
    b. Barbara never talks back to her parents.
    Which girl is more polite? ■

Paradox: Shocks and Jolts for Readers and Writers

JOHN R. CLARK
ANNA LYDIA MOTTO
University of South Florida

Any writing teacher who gives the matter a little thought may well agree that a central and recurring problem for students and their compositions is—tedium. Their prose is tepid and dull; their ideas lackluster; their interest (and commitment) level low, low, low. We may startle them into wakefulness by proclaiming that *they* are boring, that *their prose* limps and whimpers, and that *their ideas* arrive in winding sheets. Moreover, the instructor should make it ruthlessly clear that the

John R. Clark is a professor of English at the University of South Florida in Tampa. He holds a B.A. degree from the Pennsylvania State University, an M.A. from Columbia University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. Dr. Clark has published books on Jonathan Swift and on satire, and has long been concerned with matters involving irony, satire, and the skewed manipulation of language. He has also published extensive short pieces on writing and pedagogy. **Anne Lydia Motto** is chairman of the Department of Classics, University of South Florida, Tampa. She earned a B.A. at Queens College of CUNY, an M.A. at New York University, and a Ph.D. at the University of North Carolina. She has published widely on classical topics in the scholarly journals, devoting special attention to the philosopher Seneca, and has written several books. She has long been interested in language and style, in satire and paradox as rhetorical strategies.

reader of what they write suffers more than they do, for when a writer is listless and trifling, his reader is painfully lulled to sleep.

Of course, what we have been advocating in the preceding paragraph is the employment of shock tactics. And, in fact, the student's writing will perk up considerably if he engages in such stratagems himself.

The teacher might begin a unit of instruction on shock tactics by considering the conventional subjects (and titles) of student themes:

My Most Exciting Summer Vacation
My Best Friend Mr. Thompson
Why Television Is Bad for Society
How Air Pollution Is Evil and Can Endanger Our Lives
Atomic Warfare Must Be Abolished

The trouble with such topics is that they are tired, overworked, often too broad, and—still worse—uniformly pious. Nothing bores so much as evenhanded, high-minded, and continuous Goodness. The pathetic character, Ivan Ivanovich, in Chekhov's story "Gooseberries," in an inchoate moment of zeal, tells a roomful of auditors who wish to be entertained that they all ought to "Do Good!" That's safe (if unwanted) advice, for who will not endorse (or at least say that he endorses) piety in the sky? However, what makes man—and Ivan Ivanovich—interesting is that he may *say* he loves goodness, but he behaves otherwise; in Ovid's words, "video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor"[1] (I see the better and approve of it, but follow the worse). Most subjects, most writers, most souls. He is interesting precisely because he is of two or three minds, because he is rich and contrived yet also shallow and elliptic. In short, as Alexander Pope observed, man is himself a paradox, "a being darkly wise, and rudely great."

Those tentacious topics the student was writing about will start to be more interesting if indirection and paradox become a part of content and presentation:

The Worst Vacation
Arnie Thompson, Buddy and Ex-Convict
Let's Make Television Obligatory
The Case for Poisoning Our Planet
Selective Atomic Wars Generate a Positive Atmosphere

Readers are not going to fall asleep while reading such essays; the perversity, unconventionality, irony or sarcasm, and audacity of tone and content will keep the reader both upright. Indeed, literature has repeatedly interested man by being unlikely, shocking, and wayward. One need only think of Shaw's deliberately designing a series of dramas he published in collections as *Plays Unpleasant*, of Bertrand Russell's designating one of his volumes *Unpopular Essays*, or of Ionesco's entitling his compilation *Notes and Counter-Notes*. As a matter of fact, a great deal of literature is simply intended to shock the more complacent readers and attract attention; that has always been the strategy of satirists and many others, and it is a prominent feature in this century—for example, in the poetry of Eliot and Pound, in the existential fiction of Sartre and Camus, in the absurdist drama, and in the so-called black humor novels.[2] The trick for the writer is to capture attention early and sustain it throughout.

Such also is the dominant tactic in many essays. The teacher might read a bit from Bertrand Russell's challenging essay "In Praise of Idleness"[3] or from George Orwell's passage "In Defense of Beggars"[4] to illustrate how the essayist can utilize paradox and contradiction. Many textbooks contain exemplars of this technique for achieving attention, interest, and even discomfort. In the relatively new reader by Barnet, Berman, and Burto entitled *Literature for Composition* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1984) there are instances in abundance. Here are a few of the more noteworthy: *Letter*: William Cullen Bryant, "Dear Mother." *Essay*: Jim Doherty, "How Cemeteries Bring Us Back to Earth"; May Sarton, "The Rewards of Living a Solitary Life"; C. S. Lewis, "We Have No Right to Happiness"; Langston Hughes, "Salvation." *Fiction*: James Joyce, "Araby"; William Carlos Williams, "The Use of Force"; Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find." *Poetry*: William Shakespeare, "When Icicles Hang by the Wall"; John Donne, Holy Sonnet XIV; Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress"; Thomas Hardy, "The Convergence of the Twain"; Robert Frost, "Design."

In every case we have listed, the writer is using fashion against popular opinion, nudging the reader into rapt attention. The reader might not always agree with the author but he is rendered alert, thoughtful, empowered. Furthermore, the author himself has become animated, cunning, fascinated, aroused. Such a relationship between reader and writer, the instructor assuredly wants to show his class, is electrifying, and therefore enlightening. And when the teacher induces his writing class to move in that direction, he'll be accomplishing just what the doctor ordered. ●

1. *Metamorphoses* 7.20-21; Medea is speaking.

2. Consider also the collection of recent experimental fiction, *Anti-Story*, edited by Philip Stevick (New York: Free Press, 1971).

3. Chapter I from *In Praise of Idleness and Other Essays* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1935).

4. In *Down and Out in Paris and London* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961), pp. 172-74.

A Descriptive List of Journals

The *TESOL Newsletter* for August 1985 contained a special insert entitled "Journals of Interest to TESOL Members." This insert consisted of a descriptive list of 67 journals that deal with practical issues relating to the teaching of English to speakers of other languages. Each entry included the name and a brief description of the journal, as well as the name and address of the editor(s) and publisher, subscription information, manuscript guidelines, book review information, and other journal features. Journals from more than a dozen countries were included in the grid.

Copies of the grid are available from TESOL Publications, 2118 22nd Street N.W., Suite 205, Washington D.C. 20037, for one dollar ($1.00).

WEST BANK

The Importance of Page Presentation

ROGER SPIEGEL
Bir Zeit University

The layman's evaluation of how good a foreigner's speech is often depends more on the foreigner's pronunciation than on communicative mastery in the normal sense. I am sure that this is true of the written page as well, with the *appearance of the page*, more than the linguistic characteristics or discursive features, corresponding to the tell-tale foreign accent. Failure to separate words, failure to gather single words together, small letters that resemble capitals and vice versa (i.e., in

the middle of words), unorthodox punctuation, inconsistency in joining letters (cursive versus separated letters)—all these things cause the educated English speaker to think, involuntarily, of the errors of children, and young children at that. These extralinguistic graphic features create a negative effect, just as poor pronunciation does. In both cases something beyond the intended message is being conveyed. The difference is that, unlike those "foreign pronunciation," poor page presentations can be easily eliminated through proper instruction.

This fact—that superficial presentation often interferes with the communicative substance of a piece of writing—first came to my attention when English teachers at my university in the United States would complain to me that a foreign student in his or her predominantly American freshman English class was incompetent in English. On examining the case, I often found that, although there were some linguistic problems (whose importance the teacher was exaggerating and misreporting), it was the presentation of the page that was mainly responsible for the teacher's negative assessment of the paper's content, organization, and linguistic and discursive character. This "negative page-presentation effect," like poor pronunciation, produced inaccurate and unjustified generalizations. The native speaker can get away with isolated grammatical mistakes and pronunciation blunders, and may also, from time to time, make errors of page presentation with no ill effects, since in the main his presentation is orthodox and therefore convincing; the foreign writer of English cannot do this.

A new emphasis

I have never had the slightest interest in prescriptivism, and I am certainly a champion of communicative competence when the choice is between an emphasis on grammatical forms and the ability to communicate an idea. However, I have been made well aware of the necessity of conforming to the prestige variety of a language and of normative behavior in general (dress, gesture, punctuality, proxemics, etc.), especially for members of minority groups in the United States. The same is true for foreign learners of English, especially those who plan to use the language in business: making a sale may depend more on the social psychological aspects of the relationship between buyer and seller than on the actual sentences used. A note of quite childish general appearance may shake the confidence of a prospective buyer.

Consequently, in my communications classes for business majors, I required students to adhere (within reason) to norms of capital formation, spacing, format, and mechanics generally. For many students this was a new emphasis, since in a conscientious attempt to avoid prescriptivism many of their teachers had relaxed such requirements. I took care, of course, to avoid any semblance of prescriptivism and carefully explained what I was doing and why: that the social message of a piece of writing should be an overriding consideration. Some students complained about these "new" requirements and maintained that their teachers in the past had never taught them such things (some of which may have been true and some forgetfulness).

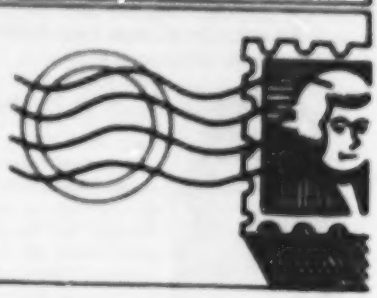
What I am talking about is an aspect of writing that, because of the understandable and justifiable reaction to prescriptivism, has become underemphasized, to the ultimate detriment of the student in his attempts to accomplish social acts by means of writing. In the past, hidebound prescriptivism has put students off and so damaged the instructional process. However, if conscious attention is given to the good reasons for careful attention to page composition, better results are likely to occur—more likely than from either a prescriptivist approach or a laissez-faire reaction to prescriptivism. This new basis for something resembling an old approach also encourages conscientious teachers not to completely ignore mechanical problems of page composition, throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

An encouraging step

Needless to say, this emphasis on social self-presentation in page composition is a small part of any course, and it is only a small example of the gradual, hopefully large-scale, extension that EFL teaching is undergoing in the direction of sociolinguistic awareness. Small as this piece of the puzzle of sociolinguistics and teaching is, however, there are some important spin-off benefits. With consistent, clear instruction and feedback, any student can master, for example, spacing in English, and this is true of few aspects of language learning. With most writing problems, there are some students who cannot or do not, for one reason or another, manage to change appreciably for the better in the course of the semester. If every student improves in socially significant aspects of page presentation (a neither impossible nor unimportant task), it can establish, even among the less hopeful students, an attitude that "we can become better." It has done this in my classes. ●

Following a year spent as a senior Fulbright lecturer in West Bank, **Eugene Speegle** *has returned to Texas Wesleyan University, where he has been director of the Intensive English Program since 1979. Dr. Speegle received a B.A. in linguistics and a Ph.D. in educational psychology, both from The University of Texas at Austin, and also taught at that university. He is coauthor of an advanced English text for students of business education.*

Letters



Locating a Long-Lost Friend

Dear Editor,

Before I proceed to my reason for writing this letter, let me express my heartfelt gratitude to you and your staff for publishing my name in the "Teacher Correspondents" column in the April 1985 issue of the *Forum*. Your magazine not only fosters friendship among peoples from all races, cultures, and religions but has also helped to revive a friendship that was lost in the mist of time.

In response to the publication of my address, I received numerous letters from the far ends of the world. Much as I would have loved to reply to all of them, I lacked the financial means to do so. Hence, I take this opportunity to thank all who wrote and also my sincere apologies for being unable to reply personally to such a vast multitude.

The letter that touched me most was one written by a man in his mid-40s, Mr. Amraiya Naidu from Fiji. Unlike the others, Mr. Naidu did not write on matters related to teaching the English language. He wrote desperately seeking my assistance in locating a long-lost Malaysian friend.

During the years 1961–64, Mr. Naidu had studied at Andhra University, Visakapatnam, in India. There he met and befriended a fellow student, Mr. A. Deimudu, a Malaysian from my home town of Seremban. Their friendship grew during those years together.

Upon completion of their studies—one majoring in chemistry, the other in mathematics—they returned to their respective countries. By the end of 1965, because of numer-

one changes of address and places of work, they had lost track of each other. Each tried in vain to locate the other as nearly twenty to-four years slipped by. During those years, both had married and had families.

Mr. Naidu, now the principal of a prestigious boarding school in Suva, Fiji, happened to see my address in the Forum and wrote a touching letter telling of his urgent interest in finding his friend. Although deeply moved by his sense of urgency, I had no idea of what to do. For the first time in my life someone unknown to me from a faraway land was asking for my help. How could I possibly bring two people from two different countries separated for twenty years together? The task seemed too great for me and my mind was in a turmoil. Yet I knew I had to help.

The next day I mentioned this to the other teachers in my school in the hope that they could help me locate Mr. Deimudu. Instead, many made fun of me and dismissed the whole thing as a waste of time. Many said I was silly even to try, because twenty years was a long time and many things could have happened—twenty years ago I myself was only a child, and how could I possibly bring two people so much my senior together!

But my faith did not fail me, and my frantic search began.

Being comparatively new to Seremban, my family knows very few people here. So, with the help of a few good friends, I asked senior residents about Mr. Deimudu. However, they were unable to help. In the meantime, my sister, who is a nurse, checked the medical register of her clinic for the name, but to no avail. On the third day I checked all the state telephone directories in Malaysia. Wonder of wonders! The very first person whom I called by that name and initial turned out to be the very Mr. A. Deimudu whom Mr. Naidu had described! Incidentally, Mr. Deimudu is also a principal of a secondary school—in the capital city, Kuala Lumpur. Imagine the happiness that surged through my whole being! Suddenly the world seemed very small.

I furnished Mr. Deimudu all the details about Mr. Naidu and, having completed my task, retreated from the scene. On the fifteenth of September Mr. Naidu flew to Singapore to attend a two-week seminar at the Colombo Staff College. Seizing the opportunity, Mr. Deimudu took a train down to Singapore and, for the first time in twenty years, they met. I can imagine the emotion they both must have experienced. Although I have never seen them, they both rang my home to express their gratitude. Mrs. Deimudu, too, called and promised to visit me soon.

I thank your publication, the Forum, for being the link in bringing two lost souls together.

Miss Indra Devi Sethupathy
West Malaysia

TEACHER CORRESPONDENTS

[We regret that we cannot guarantee that names will be accepted until those on the waiting list have been published. Readers are requested not to write to this column until further notice.—ED.]

I am a teacher of English in the Three-to-two English conversation course in Gunung, Indonesia. I hope you will publish my name in your list of teachers.

Sa'ing Sa'ud
Gunung, Pemuruga, Jawa Timur
Indonesia

I wish to be included in the teacher correspondents list. I'm 23 years old, male, and enjoy reading, badminton, and volleyball. I teach technical subjects at STM Negeri (a state middle level technical school).

Gajot Subiyanto
Jl. Sutoyo S. Gg. Sepakat 36
Banjarmasin 70119
Indonesia

I've been teaching English in Turkey for five years. My interests include books, magazines, swimming, traveling, and dancing.

Gazi Çivi
Cumhuriyet mah.
Atatürk cad. Yeni
Kaymakam evi karşısı
sok. Ev no: 3 Samsun/Çiğ-Hatay
Turkey

I am a teacher of English and a student of engineering. My interests include computer programming, stamps, postcards, poetry, and music. I have studied French and German, and am 23 years old.

Jorge A. Benavides Victorio
Jr. Tiziano Muñoz 467
Urb. Ingeniería
Lima 31
Perú

I am the head of the English language program at the Arab Institute for Aerospace Technology-Arab Organization for Industrialization, and I wish to be included in your list of teacher correspondents.

Nora Talaat Morcos
8 Sabbagh St. Apt. 12
Shobra, Cairo
Egypt

I teach English in a secondary school and would like to exchange ideas with other teachers. My interests include learning about other countries, stamps, coins, and postcards.

Rowland Tan
225, Pekan Sik
Kedah
Malaysia

ANSWERS TO LIGHTER SIDE

(Surface tension (reading from left to right starting with the first one) is a property of the associated phrases appears on page 46) • understand • as big as • year after year (year by year) • morning overtime • time after time • fall down • side by side • street corner • chosen heart • talking talk • crossroads • read ing between the lines • dinnertime • four degrees below zero • ice cube(d).

Key Questions: 1. One the day he or she was born. 2. 70. 3. Probably not, because if he was as wise as wisdom he would be dead. 4. Because it too far to walk. 5. Nerve. The rest would have flown away.

Please include me in your columns of teacher correspondents. I am a part-time English teacher and I'd like to exchange ideas with others. My interests include anthropology, literature, and traveling.

Ali Boumediene
Casilla #467
Sucursal 6
Rosario

I wish to be included in the Teacher Correspondents column. I teach mathematics and English at the secondary level, and am interested in broadening my horizons through correspondence with other teachers. I love reading, writing, and listening to beautiful music.

Miss Carmelita Olaivar
Mindanao Central Academy
Kibawe, Bukidnon
Philippines

I have been teaching English for one year at the secondary school of Mechéria and would like very much to help me get in touch with any teachers from around the world interested in exchanging English books. I am interested in grammar books.

Kafi Hamid
A 124 rue Benaouda Mohammed
Quartier Khemissi
Mechéria Naama
Algeria

I am a young lecturer of English and linguistics at the University of North Sumatra. One of my special interests is psycholinguistics, but I am having difficulty in preparing material for a book I am writing. I would like to exchange ideas with other lecturers in different parts of the world to help me complete my book.

Mr. Eddy Setia S.K.
Faculty of Letters
North Sumatra University
Jln. Universitas 19
Medan, Indonesia

I am a language instructor working with a company that deals with natural gas liquefaction. My students here are employees (adults). I wish to be included in the list of teacher correspondents and exchange ideas with others who teach adults or ESP.

Nano Sorrino Ridhiaraharia
PT. Arun Training Centre
P.O. Box 22
Lhokseumawe
North Aceh
Indonesia

I have a degree in agricultural economics and have been teaching English in a state school since 1982. I am 27 years old and would like to exchange ideas with other teachers in different parts of the world.

Mr. R. M. Jayawardena
Dambagalla
Sri Lanka

I've been teaching English for the past 10 years, and I am now the director of Centro Linguístico e Cultural de Marília (School of Languages). Our teachers and I would like to correspond with people in various parts of the world.

Maria Ana Ramos Vieira
Centro Linguístico e Cultural
Rua Rio Grande do Sul, 112
17.500 Marília SP
Brazil

I am a new English teacher and would enjoy corresponding with other experienced teachers around the world.

Miss Dilanka Kumarasinghe
Singha Gini
Thambuttegama
Kurunegala
Sri Lanka

I am a teacher of English in a secondary school. I am 33 years old and my interests include learning foreign languages and photography.

Mr. Grigorovitch
Academik
Milana Tsarot
Algeria

I am a teacher of Greek and English. My interests include philosophy, literature, theater, music, history, philosophy, and traveling. I also enjoy writing articles and essays.

Panagiotis N. Kokkinakis
3 Democratias Street
Nicosia 143
Cyprus

I am a young reader of the *Forum*, and I would like to be included in the list of correspondents.

Rosalene Macedo Franca Freitas
Av. 35 A entre ruas 28 e 29 no 130
St. Bill Instituto
Minas Gerais
Brazil

I am a qualified teacher of English now working for a private sector organization in Natal. I would like to hear from teachers of English all over the world, especially from Britain and the U.S. I am an Indian female (24 years old), and, in addition to the teaching of ESL, my interests include traveling, cooking, bridge, and swimming.

Ms. Anila P. Maisuria
c/o The Urban Foundation
P.O. Box 1668
Durban 4000
Republic of South Africa

I teach English in a secondary school and would like to exchange ideas with other teachers throughout the world. I am especially interested in knowing the kinds of materials—texts, visual aids—other teachers are using.

Lukas Dominikus
C.P. 1343
Maputo
Mozambique

I have been teaching English for more than 10 years. I have set up a private English-medium high school and would like suggestions and help in teaching English.

Rizwan Imran Malik
Commissioner Degree College
Gujranwala
Pakistan

I am a Mexican teacher of English and I want to receive letters from my colleagues in different parts of the world.

Miss Esperanza Ibarra Diaz
Antonio Ortega #617
Colonia del Valle
03100 Mexico City
Mexico

I am 35 years old and teach English in a secondary school. My interests include learning foreign languages, stamps, literature, and traveling.

Irena Stuska
ul. 400 Wschodnia
ul. Czerniakowska 1
Poland

I have taught ESL/EFL in Nigeria, Oman, Somalia, and Pakistan for more than 15 years. Besides English, my interests are in comparative political systems, cross-cultural awareness, and modern fiction and criticism.

Zahid Hussain
c/o Z. A. Bhutta
42, The Mall
Lahore
Pakistan

I am not only a teacher of English, but also a research worker in economics. I specialize in marketing, and also love astronomy and psychiatry.

Bolesław Kurata
ul. Grunwaldzka 22B/6
43-300 Bielsko-Biała
Poland

I am a secondary-school teacher of English, French, and Spanish. I also studied journalism and have worked for more than 15 years at two local newspapers in Huancayo. I would like to exchange ideas, methodologies, books, magazines, cassettes, photos, and calendars with teachers all over the world.

Carlos Crisóstomo Allcorr
Jr. Lima No. 1936
Huancayo (Depto. Junín)
Peru

I am 31 years old and teach English in a secondary school. My interests include reading, collecting postcards, and traveling.

Ilyn N. Abhicudanda
Vidyodaya Pirivena
Malwana, Mahawila, Galle
Sri Lanka

BOOKS RECEIVED

Ahmad, Khurshid, Greville Corbett, Margaret Rogers, and Roland Sussex. *Computers, Language Learning and Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985. viii + 150 pages.

Butovsky, Lillian, and Esther Perrelli. *Welcome to Canadian English*. A basic handbook for students living in Ontario. Part 1 and Part 2. Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, 1984.

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Pavlik, Cheryl. *Speak Up*. Beginning pronunciation and task listening. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1985. v + 96 pages.

Reeves, George. *The New Idioms in Action*. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1985. xviii + 199 pages.

Wohl, Milton. *Techniques for Writing Composition*. Revised ed. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1985. xvi + 262 pages.

Zanger, Virginia Vogel. *Face to Face*. The cross-cultural workbook. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1985. xviii + 164 pages.

Glossary of Lighter Side Idioms

working overtime: working more than the usual or required number of hours

time after time: often; repeatedly

side by side: next to each other

broken heart: great unhappiness or disappointed affection

falling star: a meteor

crossroads: an intersection of two main roads; a crucial point, especially where a decision must be made

reading between the lines: understanding more of the writer's meaning than he has actually stated

downtown: the main business district of a city

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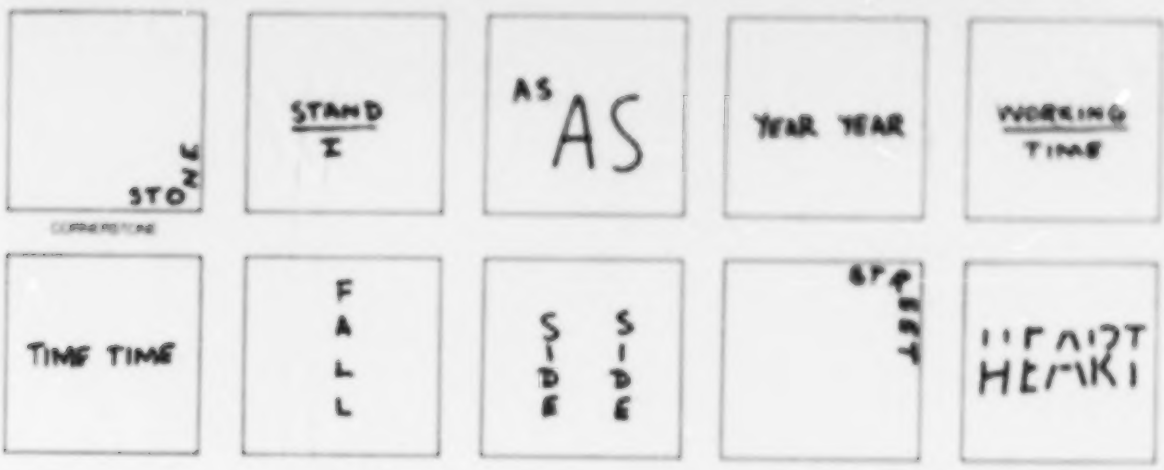
"The Lighter Side"

Graphic English

Using the position and arrangement of the letters and words in each box find the English word or phrase the picture represents. The first one has been done as an example.



ANSWERS APPEAR ON PAGE 47

Silly Questions

1. How many birthdays does the average person have?
2. Divide 30 by one half and add ten. What is the answer?
3. Is it legal in your country for a man to marry his widow's sister?
4. Why do ducks and geese fly south in the winter?
5. Nine crows sat on a limb of a tree. Farmer Jones shot three of them. How many crows remained?

SCHOOL DAZE
AT 8 YEARS...
I WOULD LIKE TO WRITE A STORY ABOUT A LITTLE PRINCE WHO GATHERS ROSES
WAIT 'TIL YOU LEARN TO WRITE!
AT 14 YEARS...
IT'S THE STORY OF A BOY WHO GROWS FLOWERS
FIRST CORRECT ALL YOUR MISTAKES!
AT 18 YEARS...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY!
YOU HAVE NO IMAGINATION!

Adapted from Québec français, October 1981

24/4

FORUM

ENGLISH TEACHING FORUM
A JOURNAL FOR THE TEACHER OF ENGLISH OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

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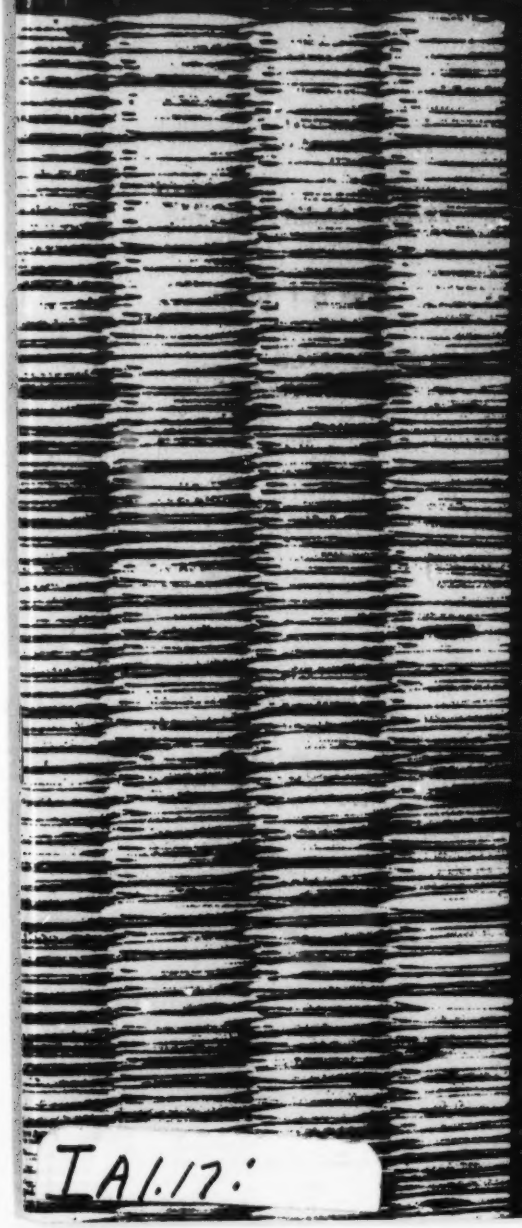

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Editorial

Readers who completed and returned the questionnaire that was included in the January 1986 issue may be interested to know that at this writing we have received about 3000, and they continue to pour in. Each one is carefully read and its contents noted, individually and statistically.

We will comment in detail about the survey at a later date. Our purpose here is simply to say to those readers who look forward to the recorded disc in each October issue (and many have so indicated): Take heart! Although you will not find a disc in this issue, one will be included in the next issue (January 1987). And those who have wanted shorter, simpler dialogic material with a little humor, may find this one worth waiting for.

The January issue will also have a slightly changed format—appropriate, we think, for a magazine about to turn 25—but the content and departments of the journal will remain largely the same, at least for now.

Along with the deluge of questionnaires, our daily mail has been bringing a flood tide of manuscripts, only a few of which we have room to publish. Unfortunately, at present it is not possible to produce a larger or more frequent journal, so we shall continue to try to meet readers' needs and interests as well as we can in the space available. Perhaps in time we can expand; meanwhile, we hope that many of the good articles we cannot include will find their way into other periodicals—especially countrywide or regional journals, where they can do much practical good for English teaching in the community.

☆ ☆ ☆

Two of the articles in this issue—by John and Zughoul—present two sides to a current debate in at least one part of the world as to the place of literature in the teaching of English as a foreign language. To these two articles we have added one from a Chinese reader with a somewhat different perspective on the subject. Together these three articles should provide a fairly broad view of the question.

☆ ☆ ☆

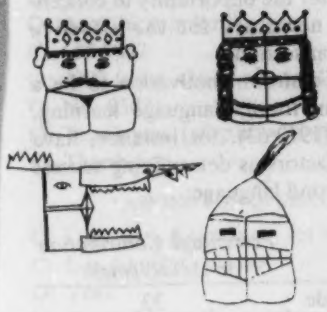
Notes from TESOL '86: When Edward Anthony wrote his article "Approach, Method, and Technique" in 1962, he could hardly have imagined how well it would be remembered some 24 years later. We heard it referred to on several occasions at the TESOL convention in California. We were reminded of the nice distinctions he had made between the three terms, and this set us to musing on the different ways those terms have been used in the ensuing years. During the last couple of decades the words *method* and *methodology* have been much used and often loosely (in places where Anthony's definitions might have called for the use of *approach* or *technique*). However, today we hear the word *method* less and less. TESOL theoreticians seem more comfortable using the broader term *approach*, and, if they are practicing teachers, speak of *techniques* (rather than *methods*) that seem to work within that approach.

This is more than just a matter of words. In both research and practice, language teaching is in a particularly experimental period. There may even be a reversal of relationships, with practice leading theory. As Roger Bowers said in substance in a TESOL plenary session, the old saying "It's all right in theory, but does it work in practice?" may well be changing to "It's all right in practice, but does it work in theory?"

The implications of the present distance between theory and practice and of the apparent shift in their relationship may be more significant than we yet realize for the role of the individual teacher. We can look forward to hearing more about "classroom research" in the continuing quest for better ways of teaching and learning.

—ACN

FORUM



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Anne Covell Newton
Editor

Mary Jo Ilacqua Boya
Managing Editor

Susan Gail Pollock
Editorial Assistant

Leigh McDaniel
Production Assistant

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Using Telephone Conversations to Practice Speaking and Listening Comprehension

HIDEYUKI TAKASHIMA
Kagoshima University

HIDEYUKI TAKASHIMA is an associate professor of English at Kagoshima National University, where he has taught EFL since 1980. He holds an M.Ed. in TEFL from Hiroshima National University and an M.A. in TESL from the University of California at Los Angeles.
Mr. Takashima has written several articles ranging from cultural differences in comics to language acquisition and learning and classroom teaching practice, and he has recently co-authored a textbook, *Catch It! Bilingual News Using Your Eyes and Ears* (The Shinozaki Shorin Press).

Little attention has been paid to the use of telephone conversation as a pedagogical tool in the TESL/TEFL classroom despite the extent to which students in an electronically advanced society make use of phones. In this article I will show how situations involving the making or receiving of telephone calls, authentic or simulated, can be introduced in the classroom as a technique for practicing speaking and listening.[1]

Students often have an opportunity to make or receive calls in English. Because of this potential authentic need, the technique I will suggest may well motivate students, as well as providing opportunities to contextualize material in an interesting way. The more realistic the situation, the greater the opportunity to concentrate on the language necessary for the effective completion of a verbal transaction.

ESL/EFL scholars have shown motivation to be a powerful factor in second/foreign-language learning. Jakobovits and Nelson (1970:63), for instance, have identified the following factors as determining success in the acquisition of a second language:

Factor	*Percentage Contribution to Achievement*
Foreign Language Aptitude	33
Intelligence	20
Perseverance or Motivation	33
Others	14
Total	100

With regard to motivation, Jakobovits and Nelson (1970:63) point out that "the teacher can manipulate motivation *only* by supplying and organizing lesson content to fit the existing needs and desires of the students."

As Alexander (1976) has noted, when students recognize that what they are learning is relevant to their needs, their desire to learn is strengthened. McIntosh (1979:235), in this regard, has underlined the importance of contextualization. She states that "it must be emphasized that contextualization is not merely a nice decoration but a necessary and integral part of any effective language lesson. Very little is learned if the student is presented with a string of unrelated sentences all exhibiting the same structure."

Taking the above factors into consideration, I will discuss in both theoretical and practical terms the ways in which using telephone situations can be an effective

This is a revised version of a paper that appeared in *Kagoshima Studies in English Language and Literature*, Spring 1985.

1. Very few articles deal with the use of telephone conversation in the classroom. Among these, Bennett (1968) uses telephone conversations in testing. For some texts on telephone conversations with detailed classroom instructions, see *English Telephone Conversations* by N. Ferguson and M. O'Reilly, *On the Line* by K. Cripwell, and *Connections: Communicative Listening and Speaking Activities* by J. Boyd and M. Boyd.

classroom technique for practicing speaking and listening.[2]

Characteristics of telephone conversations

Below are some typical calls that students abroad might wish to make. (O = operator, C = caller)

MAKING AN OVERSEAS CALL

O: Operator.
C: I'd like to make an international call to Japan, please.
O: To Japan, O.K. Just a second. Do you have the area code?
C: Yes. 75, Kyoto.
O: And the number?
C: 655-9342.
O: 9302 (*nine, three, oh, two*)?
C: No, 9342.
O: Thank you. (*telephone rings*) The number is ringing.
C: Thank you.

ASKING FOR OPERATOR ASSISTANCE

O: Directory Assistance, for which city?
C: Los Angeles, please.
O: Yes?
C: Could I have the number for American Airlines?
O: American Airlines. It's 274-6185.
C: 274-6185?
O: That's correct.
C: Thank you.
O: You're welcome.

ASKING FOR INFORMATION

(S = shop clerk)

S: A & D Shoe Shop. May I help you?
C: Yes. Are you open today?
S: Yes, we are.
C: What are the hours, please?
S: 10 to 5.
C: Are the hours the same during the weekend?
S: We're open 10 until 6 on Saturday and we're closed on Sundays and bank holidays.
C: Thank you very much.
S: You're welcome.

Some characteristics of such telephone conversations can be noted:

1. The time constraint (to avoid additional cost) makes for brevity.
2. Communication is solely by voice; there are no extralinguistic clues.
3. There is some loss of audible sound range over the phone.[3]

To these we might add that one can take notes if necessary without any eye contact with the respondent.

Validity of using telephone conversations in the classroom

The second and third characteristics would appear to argue against using telephone conversations in the classroom. However, seen from another perspective, they may prove to be advantages. For one thing, since the only clues are sounds, students have to concentrate wholly on them to decode the message, and they must speak as clearly as possible to encode them. So this kind of exercise forces students to be more alert both in listening and in speaking. Also, prepared information must often be slotted in and around frequently recycled patterns such as *May I speak to . . .*, *He is not here right now*, or *Can I take/leave a message?* This helps students learn when and where they should pay closest attention when they try to decode information, and it helps them learn how patterns work in speaking and/or listening over the phone as well as in general. Hatch (1983:82) notes that learned chunks help facilitate language learning:

> As for input, there seems to be some evidence in our data to support the notion that chunk-learned material *does* become part of the system. There is evidence, at least at the sentence level, that chunks are gradually broken up and incorporated into the system.

Furthermore, students become aware of the fact that we do not always hear or pay full attention to everything said. As Rivers (1968:141) points out, a student at an advanced level in listening comprehension "anticipates certain sequences of low information content, which in his previous experiences with the language had occurred in similar contexts, and his full attention is given to the high-information items."

Moreover, callers must, to some extent, anticipate potential answers. This ability to anticipate is crucial, as Goodman (1967:260) points out: "Ability to anticipate that which has not been seen, of course, is vital in reading, just as the ability to anticipate what has not been heard is in listening."

It is also true that telephone conversations often contain expressions that are used in other situations, for instance, *let me get a pen and paper, M as in Mary, T as in Tom.* So, with appropriate effort, telephone-conversation practice can provide a good review or consolidation of items students have been taught. Last but not least,

2. The teacher's role is not mentioned here. However, since we have seen that three factors—foreign language aptitude, intelligence, and perseverance or motivation—determine 86 percent of the students' achievement, the teacher's role could be minimal. But where then does the teacher come in? I believe he/she is responsible for making input comprehensible. Input is said to be comprehensible when it is presented by "simplified" and/or nonlinguistic means such as realia or pictures. Some characteristics of "simplified input" are "slow rate and clear articulation," "more use of high frequency vocabulary," and "syntactic simplification, shorter sentences" (Cf. Krashen 1982:64).

3. To be more precise, "experimental work in filtering out different ranges of frequency and in synthesizing speech can be transmitted using frequencies from 200 to 4,000 c/s. Less is, of course, necessary for intelligibility; an average telephone system, for example, uses only the frequencies between about 400 and 2,400 c/s" (Brosnahan and Malmberg 1970:170).

telephone exercises point up that between the caller and the receiver of the call there must be "comprehensible input." Krashen (1980, 1982, 1984) claims that language is acquired in only one way—by understanding messages: "The best way (the only way?) to 'teach' speaking, according to [the input hypothesis], is simply to provide comprehensible input. Early speech will come when the acquirer feels 'ready'; this readiness state arrives at somewhat different times for different people, however" (Krashen 1980:171).

In short, telephone practice in the classroom affords students a good opportunity to understand how meaningful oral communication can be achieved.

Suggested techniques

The fact that students are usually already "phone-oriented" may mean that no additional motivational devices are necessary. I suggest the following steps, however, as preparation for the exercises.

1. Students are asked what they would do if, for instance, they had to get information on the correct time or on flight services, or if they urgently needed to talk with one of their friends.

2. They are asked what they should say in these situations.

3. They are asked how they would respond if they do not receive the anticipated response.

The diagram below gives a rough idea of basic exchanges for telephone-conversation practice. Although by no means comprehensive, it suggests possible topics as well as some useful basic skills.

Some Representative Exchanges over the Telephone

GENERAL TELEPHONE SKILLS
(1) Initiating and ending calls
(2) Getting hold of the right person
(3) Leaving a message
(4) Identifying oneself
(5) Making oneself understood
(6) Making appointments

MAKING CALLS	CALLING THE OPERATOR	RECEIVING CALLS
• asking for information, e.g., asking office hours • making a reservation, e.g., theater tickets • cancelling or postponing a reservation, e.g., a table at a restaurant • informing, e.g., flight reconfirmation • requesting, e.g., room service in a hotel	• finding information, e.g., directory assistance • making calls through the operator, e.g., a long-distance call • asking for help, e.g., a bad connection (at home), can't get the call through (from a pay telephone) • making emergency calls • sending a telegram	• passing the call on to the right person • conveying absence and taking a message • accepting calls from the operator, e.g., collect or international calls • receiving wrong numbers or prank calls

Here is a sample dialogue that includes the six items listed under General Telephone Skills. The numbers after the sentences correspond to those in the diagram.

LEAVING A MESSAGE

Ms. Smith: Hello.
Mr. Tanaka: Hello. Is this Professor Smith's residence? } (1)
Ms. Smith: Yes, it is.
Mr. Tanaka: This is Masao Tanaka. May I speak to Professor Smith? } (2)
Ms. Smith: I'm sorry. He isn't in right now.
Mr. Tanaka: Oh, I see. I wonder if I can leave a message. } (3)
Ms. Smith: Oh, sure. Hold on a second. Let me get a pen and paper. (*after a second*) Thank you for waiting.
Mr. Tanaka: I'm calling to ask if I can make an appointment to see him about my graduation thesis, some time tomorrow afternoon. } (3)
Ms. Smith: O.K., and your name again?
Mr. Tanaka: Masao Tanaka.
Ms. Smith: Oh, I'm sorry. Could you spell it out?
Mr. Tanaka: Yes. M-A-S-A-O, Masao, and T-A-N-A-K-A, Tanaka. (4)
Ms. Smith: Masao, Tamaka? (5)
Mr. Tanaka: No, my last name is Tanaka: T-A, N as in Nancy, A-K-A.
Ms. Smith: Tanaka?
Mr. Tanaka: Yes, that's right.
Ms. Smith: Shall I have him return your call when he comes home?
Mr. Tanaka: Yes, please.
Ms. Smith: What's the number?
Mr. Tanaka: It's 655-9342.
Ms. Smith: 6-5-5, 9-3-4-2. O.K. Will you be there all day today?
Mr. Tanaka: Yes. Would you tell him that I will be up late to finish the final draft, so that he can call me any time he likes.
Ms. Smith: O.K. I'll tell him that you called and he can call any time.
Mr. Tanaka: Thank you very much. Goodbye. } (1)
Ms. Smith: Bye-bye, and good luck with your thesis!
Mr. Tanaka: Thank you. Goodbye.

Another useful topic for phone-conversation practice is making job inquiries in response to an ad. Skillful classroom use of simulated telephone conversations can be more integrative and informative than might be thought. Actual conversations, of course, do not always flow as smoothly as in the examples above; therefore it is important to introduce variations. For instance, in the

example just above, when Mr. Tanaka is asked, "Will you be there all day today?" he may say, "No, I'm going out now. Could you ask him to call me after seven this evening?"

Obliging students to imagine how a conversation might be carried out on the phone makes them more alert and makes the situation more appealing and challenging. In the classroom, students should pair off, and then, to make the situation more realistic, they should sit back to back or be separated by a cardboard screen and roleplay as the caller and the recipient of the call. If a student resists a role, claiming that he will never be an operator or a shop clerk, he can read the part aloud from a text for the other student to respond to. The members of the pair should take turns doing this.

As Stevick (1976) says, if students get good "associative mediators" for memory retention, they find fewer difficulties in recalling what they have learned. In other words, when students must think for themselves, they gain knowledge that can be easily retrieved.

Conclusion

The activity I have described is intended for college or adult students. I have found that my students in the Liberal Arts Department are excited when I introduce something other than typical dialogues into the classroom, and they are pleased when they become able to use expressions that would have taken longer to learn in a regular class (e.g., "May I ask who's calling, please?" "It would be nice if I had time."). Also, this has proved to be a good opportunity to introduce cultural differences, such as daylight-saving time and how telephone bills are paid in the United States.[4]

I want to emphasize here that "a key to any good teaching is holding the students' attention, and attention-holding is often enhanced by variety rather than conformity to a set pattern" (Larsen-Freeman 1979:226). The activity presented here will, I hope, contribute to the variety of attention-holding techniques that can be used in language teaching. In sum, the advantages of using telephone-conversation practice are:

1. It appeals because it is really useful.
2. It familiarizes students with important idioms and formulaic expressions.
3. It gives students the chance to develop the ability to project and anticipate what is going to be said, and thus to grasp the total contextual framework of a discourse.
4. It can be used to present interesting cultural differences.

Because of these advantages, telephone exercises should encourage students to go further in their effort to learn English.

4. Two recordings were made while I was in the United States. One tells you that you are calling the wrong number, and the other tells the time of day. The latter was recorded at 1:59 A.M. when daylight-saving time was just ending. [In the United States, "daylight-saving time" is a method of extending daylight hours later into the evening during the summer months. This is accomplished by moving the clock ahead one hour on a certain Sunday in April at 2 A.M. and moving the clock back one hour on a Sunday in October at 2 A.M.] Using such recordings is a good way to teach both the pattern of telling time and cultural differences. The two recordings are:

a. The number you have reached is not in service at this time and there is no new number. Please be sure you have checked the telephone directory for the right number and are calling correctly. This is a recording.

b. At the tone the time will be one fifty-nine and forty seconds. (pip)
At the tone the time will be one fifty-nine and fifty seconds. (pip)
At the tone the time will be one o'clock exactly. (a time signal)
At the tone the time will be one o'clock and ten seconds. (pip)

One more point worth mentioning about cultural differences might be the alphabet on the telephone dial. In the United States, for instance, the telephone apparatus has the letters ABC DEF GHI JKL MNO PRS TUV WXY as well as the numbers 0 through 9 (in contrast with the Japanese telephone dial which has only numbers). If you wish to use the toll-free number for Japan Air Lines in the United States, you can dial either 1-800-525-3663 or 1-800-J-A-L-F-O-N-E, since each letter corresponds to the number (e.g., *JKL*: 5, *ABC*: 2, *DEF*: 3).

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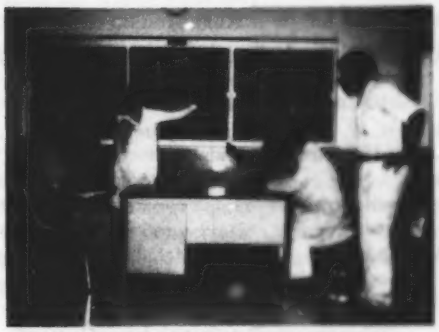
Tic-Tac-Pho: A Game for Teaching the American English Vowel System

JOHN ORIAS
Presidency of Civil Aviation, Dhahran



JOHN N. ORIAS is an instructor of technical English for the Presidency of Civil Aviation, Dhahran. Previously he was an instructor of English for Special Purposes at the Saudi Medical Services Training Center in Tabuk, and he has also taught in Costa Rica and the United States. He is shown above, at right, watching his class play Tic-Tac-Pho. Mr. Orias holds a B.A. from Queens College and an M.A. in TESL from Hunter College, both in New York.

At the University of Costa Rica and at Cartago Community College (also in Costa Rica), I was required to teach basic phonology to beginning-, intermediate-, and advanced-level EFL students. At first, I doubted the validity of phonological theory in the EFL classroom, but as I observed its effectiveness in helping students improve their pronunciation, I changed my opinion.

While teaching these courses, I developed a simple mnemonic game for reinforcing theoretical aspects of vowel production. This game I dubbed "Tic-Tac-Pho," since it employs the traditional tic-tac-toe format to teach phonology. Before I describe this game, however, we should consider why phonological theory is useful in an EFL class, and then review the variables involved in the production of vowel sounds.

Why teach phonology?

Many teachers I have met believe that phonological theory has no practical application for students of a foreign language. They claim that it is too theoretical and too time consuming—too difficult for the teacher to explain and for the student to understand. Strange symbols are used in a phonemic alphabet: the digraph /æ/ as in the word *cat*, the schwa /ə/ as in *but*, the open "o" /ɔ/ as in *bought*. It's Greek, no? So why teach phonological theory to students who are trying to learn English?

When first learning a foreign language, the student finds it difficult to isolate many of the sounds he hears and even harder to produce those sounds with any accuracy. His ears are not sensitive enough to discriminate the strange sounds, and his tongue is not accustomed to producing them. For this reason, it is useful for him to be explicitly taught the phoneme inventory of the language and to be guided in how to produce each sound.

There are three progressive steps in teaching a student new sounds (phonemes): he must learn to hear, identify, and produce the phoneme. Once the student hears the phoneme in isolation, he will, with constant exposure to the language, be able to identify that phoneme within the stream of sounds of the language. Discrimination drills can help him differentiate between the unfamiliar sounds that may be perceived as the same sound by the untrained ear. A systematic description of how the sounds are articulated aids in producing the sounds. Learning to produce accurately a sound that does not occur in one's native language requires exercising and training muscles (tongue and facial) that are unaccustomed to such usage.

One help towards reproducing phonemes is to know how they are produced. An EFL instructor often teaches pronunciation by simply pointing out a student's error and supplying the correct pronunciation. However, if the phoneme is particularly difficult to pronounce, the student could try to imitate the teacher "from now till kingdom come" and still fail to produce it. This kind of unproductive exercise, which tires both teacher and

student and takes up valuable classroom time, can often be circumvented by giving the student technical guidance in how to articulate a given phoneme. For example, if the student wants to produce the vowel sound /iy/, it is helpful to tell him to smile broadly, spread the lips, tighten the facial muscles, and raise the jaw. It is also beneficial to use paraphernalia such as a profile chart of the face to illustrate the position of the tongue in producing the target phoneme, and a mirror so the student can see the position of his own lips when he tries to produce the sound.

Going a step further, a systematic description of the English vowel system helps a student see each individual vowel phoneme in relation to each other and to the whole vowel system (see figure 3). A grid illustrating the variables involved in the production of vowels can be used as a mnemonic device to help retention and guide correction. It gives the student a simple method for analyzing, pinpointing his errors and making the appropriate adjustments. For example, a Spanish-speaking student tends to substitute /iy/ for /ɪ/ when speaking English. If he had been taught basic phonology and a phonemic alphabet, all the teacher would need to say is "not /iy/ . . . but /ɪ/." The student would then know the adjustments he must make: less tenseness with a little less spreading of the lips. He would also know that, unlike /iy/, /ɪ/ is not a diphthongal glide and is of shorter duration.

For the EFL student, learning correct pronunciation is made particularly difficult by the fact that the English alphabet does not consistently represent the English phonemes; in fact, English has one of the least phonetically spelled alphabets. A phoneme may be represented in different words by several different letters or groups of letters. For example, the phoneme /iy/ can be represented by a multitude of different spellings, as in the words *she, Caesar, believe, leave, see, people,* and *seize*. Such inconsistency in the correspondence of sound to symbol confuses an EFL student, making it difficult to deduce the basic sounds of the language without explicit instruction.

In studying English, learning a phonemic alphabet can be a useful tool to help students identify a given sound and relate it to one and only one symbol. Once he can isolate a given sound by giving it a fixed value (symbol), it becomes easier to identify in other words. All sounds in all words can be reduced to a limited repertoire of phonemic symbols.

Variables of vowel production

The three basic variables that determine the production of a given vowel are: vertical position of the highest part of the tongue (high-mid-low), horizontal position of the highest part of the tongue in the mouth (front-central-back), and tenseness of the facial muscles (tense-lax). For example, with respect to the position of the tongue, to produce an /ɪ/ sound as in *bit* or *hit,* the highest part of the tongue is in a "high-front" position in the oral cavity. To produce the vowel /ʊ/ as in *foot* or *put,* the highest part of the tongue is in a "high-back" position. In contrast, the /a/ sound is in a "low-central" position. Figure 1 illustrates the position of the tongue when producing an /ɪ/, /ʊ/, or /a/ phoneme (Fromkin and Rodman 1974:56).

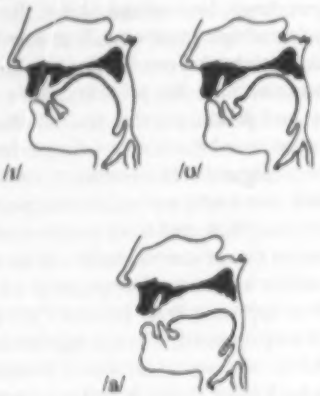


Figure 1.

A popular diagram used to show the approximate positioning of the tongue in the production of the different vowels in the mouth cavity is the "viĕtor triangle" (Figure 2).[1] Notice how the tongue moves from high to low, front to back, and how the lips become more or less rounded as the jaw opens or closes when pronouncing these vowels.

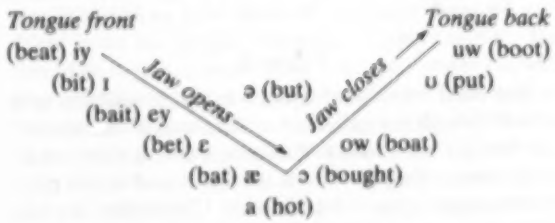


Figure 2. Viĕtor Triangle

The position of the tongue determines when the lips will be rounded or spread. Generally, front English vowels are spread and back vowels are rounded. The higher a front vowel, the more the lips are spread. Conversely, the higher a back vowel, the more the lips are rounded. Thus, telling a student to round or spread his lips in the production of certain vowels helps him produce the vowel.

1. Modification of Trager and Smith's phonemic alphabet (ɔh → ɔ).

If you look at your lips in a mirror when you say *boot* /uw/, *put* /ʊ/, *boat* /ow/, *bought* /ɔ/, the lips become progressively less rounded as you go from the high-back vowel /uw/ to the low-back vowel /ɔ/. You will also notice that the jaw drops progressively in pronouncing these same back vowels from high to low.

Similarly, if you look at your lips in a mirror when you say *beat* /iy/, *bit* /ɪ/, *bait* /ey/, *bet* /ɛ/, and *bat* /æ/, moving from high-front to low-front, the lips will become correspondingly less spread. Also, the jaw drops progressively from high-front vowels to low-front vowels, as they do with back vowels. Thus, telling an EFL student to lower or raise his jaw can aid in correcting pronunciation and producing the desired phoneme.

A useful variation of the viëtor triangle for teaching EFL students is Figure 3 (Finocchiaro 1974:25). This chart illustrates two important variables: vertical position of the tongue (high-mid-low) and horizontal position of the tongue (front-central-back). If we select one horizontal position and one other position on the vertical axis, we can approximately predict the vowel phoneme that will be produced. Thus, a high (vertical variable)-front (horizontal variable) vowel is either an /iy/ or /ɪ/ sound, a high-back vowel is either an /uw/ or /ʊ/, a low-central vowel is an /ə/ sound.

The highest part of the tongue is

	front	central part	back
high	iy ɪ		uw ʊ
mid	ey ɛ	ə	ow
low	æ	a	ɔ

in the ... of the mouth.

Figure 3.

The third important variable in the production of a vowel, though not indicated on the chart, is "tenseness" or "laxness" of a vowel. This means that in the production of some English vowels the cheek and throat muscles are kept tense, while in other vowels they are lax. The tense vowels in English are diphthongized with a "y" or "w" glide, longer in duration and characterized by a slightly higher tongue position. For example, the highest vowels /iy/ and /uw/ are tense while the lowest vowels /æ/, /a/, and /ɔ/ are lax. Tenseness or laxness is particularly important in distinguishing the vowel pairs /iy/-/ɪ/, /uw/-/ʊ/, and /ey/-/ɛ/. The tongue is in approximately the same position for each of these pairs, and the most important difference is tenseness. Thus, when teaching students the difference between these three vowel pairs, the variable of tenseness should be stressed.

To summarize, when we know the position of the tongue in the mouth, we can determine the relative rounding or spreading of the lips and dropping or raising of the jaw. When we know if a given vowel is tense or lax, we also know whether it is diphthongized. This basic description of the English vowel system is easy to teach and is a helpful tool for the students.

Tic-Tac-Pho

Tic-Tac-Pho is a mnemonic game I have developed to reinforce the student's knowledge of the articulation of American English vowels. This phonological game is based on a popular game that is easily learned: tic-tac-toe. The difference is that instead of using Xs and Os the students use a phonemic alphabet, and instead of using one grid they use two. The rules of the game are basically the same: the student who gets three marks in a row, either horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, is the winner.

iy ɪ		uw ʊ
ey ɛ	ə	ow
æ	a	ɔ

Figure 4.

Figure 4 is a simplification of Figure 3 and shows the characteristics of vowels based on two variables: horizontal and vertical position of the highest part of the tongue during the articulation of a given phoneme. Figure 4 is the grid that I have adapted for Tic-Tac-Pho. Each position on the grid signals certain articulatory characteristics of the phoneme placed there. Thus, when students learn where to place the phonemes on the grid, they also learn how the phonemes are produced. It should be noted, however, that there is no central-high vowel phoneme in English.[2] This is the only spot on the grid that cannot be filled in in the game.

Procedure

Before playing this game, students must first receive basic instruction in the variables involved in the production of English vowels: they must be able to hear, identify, and produce the vowels. After we play a few quick games of tic-tac-toe, I introduce them to Tic-Tac-Pho.

Using the blackboard, I demonstrate a couple of times how Tic-Tac-Pho is played and then ask for two volunteers to go through the motions of the game. Their game might develop as follows:

I say to player A, "give me a mid-front-lax vowel." He fills in the correct space but writes an /ɪ/, which is a

2. Some phonologists postulate a "barred-i" / ɨ / in this position. See H. A. Gleason, *An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), pp. 32–33.

high-front-lax vowel—an incorrect answer. To have a correct answer, the students must write the correct symbol and place it in the correct position on the grid. I inform player A that his response is incorrect, and he erases it from the grid. The players alternate turns, and player B follows after player A's incorrect response. Player B writes the correct phonemic symbol in the correct position: . Next it is player A's turn. I ask player A to give me a mid-central-lax phoneme. He writes the correct answer: . I ask player B to give me a high-back-lax phoneme. He fills in the correct symbol in the appropriate space: . (Note: not /uw/, which although back and high is not lax.) I then ask player A to give me a low-central-lax phoneme. He responds correctly: . At this point in the game, the grids of players A and B would be as follows.

Player A

Player B

Next I ask player B for a high-front-tense vowel. He writes , which is the right position but wrong symbol. Player A then has the opportunity to fill in the correct answer, which he writes: . I then ask player B for a low-front vowel, and he gives the correct answer: . Finally, I ask player A for a low-back vowel. He writes the correct answer: and wins the game. Upon completing the game their grids would be as follows.

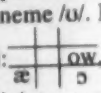
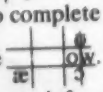
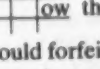
Player A

Player B

The rules of the game may be summarized as follows:

1. Three spaces in a row on the grid must be filled either horizontally, vertically, or diagonally to win the game.
2. The players must write the proper phonemic symbol for the sound in the proper position for the answer to be correct.
3. The players cannot change their answers once they are written.
4. The players alternate turns.
5. If a position on the grid has two phonemes (i.e., /iy/-/ɪ/, /ey/-/ɛ/, /uw/-/ʊ/), the players may be required to fill in both symbols or just one to gain the space.
6. If one of the players writes a wrong answer, the other player has the opportunity to provide the correct response.
7. If neither player gets the correct answer, any student in the class may volunteer the answer. In this case, neither player may fill that space on the grid.
8. If any other student supplies the answer, the player whose turn it is forfeits the question.
9. A strict time limit is set for a response.

After the students have understood the rules and practiced playing Tic-Tac-Pho, we can play the game competitively. Two students volunteer to play, and one timekeeper signals when the given time limit for an answer is over. Strips of paper are prepared beforehand with a description of a given phoneme. Either the timekeeper or another designated student selects at random one of the strips of paper and reads it; in this way, as many students as possible are involved in the game.

I also prepare strips of paper where only partial or inaccurate information is given. For example, if the strip gave partial information such as a high-lax phoneme, the student could respond with either the front phoneme /ɪ/ or the back phoneme /ʊ/. If he had the following phonemes on his grid:  , he should select the high-back-lax phoneme /ʊ/, to complete three symbols in a row and win the game  . If, on the other hand, the strip gave inaccurate information such as a mid-back-lax phoneme, and the student wrote:  this would be an incorrect answer and he would forfeit his turn, since this phoneme is not lax and there is no lax English phoneme in this position. He would be required to say there is no such phoneme, and then another slip would be drawn for him. This kind of exercise with incomplete or inaccurate information further challenges the students' competency in phonology.

In the activities I have described, the student is required to know the variables of vowel production. In another activity I adapt Tic-Tac-Pho as a vowel-discrimination game. The teacher reads at random monosyllabic words or isolated vowels from slips of paper. The players then write the correct vowel symbol for the sound they have heard in the correct grid position.

A variation of this exercise involves competition between pairs of students. On each team, one student selects at random a slip of paper and reads an isolated one-syllable word or phoneme, and his teammate writes the corresponding phoneme symbol in the correct grid position. The teacher monitors to assure not only correct grid positioning but also accurate pronunciation of the phoneme. If either aspect is incorrect, that team

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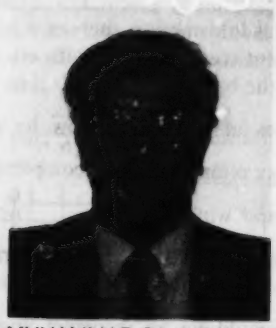
English Departments in Third World Universities: Language, Linguistics, or Literature?

MUHAMMAD RAJI ZUGHOUL
Yarmouk University



MUHAMMAD RAJI ZUGHOUL is an assistant professor in the English Department of Yarmouk University, Jordan. He received his B.A. in English and M.A. in TEFL from the American University of Beirut and his Ph.D. in applied linguistics from the University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Zughoul has published numerous articles on applied English linguistics, Arabic linguistics, and TEFL in international journals. His book, *The Interlanguage of Arabic-Speaking Learners of English: Phonology, Syntax and Lexis*, will appear next year. Dr. Zughoul was on a Fulbright Research Fellowship at the University of Texas at Austin during 1985–86.

In this article, the writer will examine the structure of the English department in Third World (henceforth, TW) universities as to their curricula, objectives, policies, and traditions; and will question the validity of maintaining such a structure on the basis of cultural, motivational, national, and pragmatic grounds. Such a reassessment is imperative if these departments are serious about responding to the emerging present-day needs of TW communities. The changing role of English—from a language of an ex-colonial power learned by the "native" elites to take jobs in the bureaucracy to an international language of science, medicine, technology, aviation, business, scholarship, and modernization in general—necessitates drastic changes in the traditional approaches of teaching/learning it as well as in the way it is perceived. There is much in common among the TW English departments in contrast to those in English-speaking countries, in Europe, and in some Asian countries where there is a degree of common cultural background (Pratt 1982). TW examples will be drawn from the Arab world, India, Pakistan, and a number of Asian and African countries.

Inappropriate and unbalanced curricula

The basic academic design of the English department in TW universities has been either inherited or borrowed. The early English departments in these countries were modeled after their counterparts in British universities. This replication has led to an acceptance by TW countries of British English-department objectives, standards, and achievement. Of the three components of the curricula in these departments, namely, language, linguistics, and literature, the one that has unjustifiably received primary focus is the literature component. In fact, the syllabus of an English department in a TW university has been considered lacking if it does not include complete coverage of English literature with courses on the different periods, genres, and major writers. The offerings typically include such titles as medieval literature, English poetry from Chaucer to Milton, Shakespeare, poetry from Dryden to the present, metaphysical poetry, Renaissance drama, Victorian literature, Romantics, Elizabethan and Jacobian drama, seventeenth-century English literature, contemporary American literature, major writers, and literary criticism.

The author (Zughoul 1983) examined the curricula of a number of English departments at Arab universities (the universities of Baghdad, Damascus, Kuwait, Yarmouk, Amman) and the two American universities in the Middle East area (Cairo and Beirut), and he concluded that the curricula of these departments (with the exception of the American University of Beirut) are

This article is based on three earlier articles by the author (Zughoul 1983, 1985, forthcoming in *IRAL*).

heavily dominated by the literature component. The same can be generalized to the rest of the TW countries. In some of these countries, the study of English literature not only dominates the syllabus of the English department but also shapes the syllabus of the secondary schools.[1]

The other two components of the syllabus—language and linguistics—are clearly underrepresented in the curriculum, with the language component the weakest of all. It typically includes two courses in communication skills and a course in writing. Rarely does a department in a TW country offer solid language training, i.e., training in reading comprehension, listening comprehension, term-paper writing, or speech. It is, curiously, assumed that the incoming student is proficient in the language and that he needs no further language training. This unrealistic assumption is, to a great extent, responsible for the failure of English departments in TW countries to respond to the needs of the communities they are supposed to serve.

The linguistics component of English departments in TW universities is dubious. Typically, it consists of an introduction to the study of language and a course, or courses, on phonology, syntax, and sometimes semantics. However, because of the increasing number of linguists and because of the tradition of automatically placing them, regardless of their areas of specialization, in the English department, pressure has been exercised on these department councils to offer more linguistics courses to undergraduates. Such offerings in some departments are a replication of graduate programs in linguistics in some European or American universities. In fact, a look at some of these offerings reflects what the faculty members want to teach, not what the students need, want, or are supposed to study. It is also generally assumed that these linguists, even though their work has not been done on English but more probably on their native languages, are "experts" in language pedagogy, and in all cases they are given the language courses in the department to teach. On the average, those colleagues have neither the training nor the motivation to teach language, and in fact they are usually misplaced in English departments. Besides, it is axiomatic that a linguist is no substitute for a trained language teacher. In this connection, it is worth adding that literature specialists are assumed to be language teachers as well. But as Healey (1966:11, as quoted by Latorre and Palacios 1980:229) contends, language teaching and the study of literature are "not necessarily concomitant activities which can be carried on by the same person concurrently."

1. Harrison (1974:46-48), in a chapter entitled "Language and Literature," gives some striking examples of this trend from various parts of the world. His examples, accompanied by his inquiries and comments, show an extension of the traditional dogma for the teaching of English literature.

Inadequately prepared students

The competence of the incoming student, on the average, leaves much to be desired. In fact, it can be safely generalized that the linguistic competence of the incoming student—and, for that matter, even the graduate of a TW university—does not enable him to make sense of a literary piece, let alone appreciate it. The student usually ends up glossing vocabulary items rather than studying literature for appreciation and analysis. Well-documented research evidence on the competence of the English major is scanty, but examples of general impressionistic evaluation are available in a variety of references. The author (Zughoul 1985) reported the results of proficiency testing of the graduates of the Yarmouk University English department, where the standards were judged to be favorably comparable with those of the rest of Arab universities. The average equated mean score of the three groups of graduates (168 students) who took the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP) was 67.75 (individual scores were 68.22, 69.02, and 66.02), which is interpreted in the manual of the test as "not proficient enough to take any academic work." This average mean score indicates that only a few of our graduates would qualify for admission into the freshman program of an English-medium university.

In another study in Jordan, Abu-Hamdia (1983) solicited the views of some employers of English-department graduates whose jobs require the use of English. His conclusions corroborate the findings of the previous study. Okby (1982) even extends the problem to native speakers of English and feels that "underachievement in the field of English as a language has never been so acutely sensed, as it is now both at home and abroad, in a world that has never stood in greater need for communication in the English language." In India, Daswani (1982) concludes that no one has ever learned English in the formal educational system and that those who have acquired mastery of the language did so outside the Indian school or university. He attributes this to the fact that British educators, in their attempt to create brown Englishmen in India, did not pay any serious attention to systematic instruction in the language. Instead, they sought to replicate the English school and university systems, where English as a language needed little attention.

Pratt (1982) expressed his conviction that English departments in TW countries are concerned only with providing their students with an "impressive transcript" when they apply to graduate schools. While those students do not lack intelligence, "their general level of English is weak and they seldom have the necessary reading background to cope with undiluted specialized courses." Spencer (1979:54), in an experimental study on Iranian college students majoring in English literature, concluded that second-year students are "partial-

ly" able to understand literary texts, while third- and fourth-year students are able to understand, but unable to respond; both groups are frustrated as a result of this "non-involvement" and inability to respond.

Gilroy-Scott (1983:1–2), talking about overseas students, maintains that all too often "emphasis on literary knowledge disguised poor language attainments—'The maxi-coat of literature hiding the mini-skirt of language' (Arthur King)." Gilroy-Scott asserts that the picture emerging from overseas institutions shows "increasing numbers of new students lacking both the background and the necessary study skills." Those ideas are shared by Rodger (1983:50–51), who maintains that many ESL students with "pitifully low proficiency" are often exposed to thoroughly institutionalized "English Literature" degree syllabuses. These syllabuses are modeled on "archaic British ones," which do not provide continued training in the use of the "elementary linguistics and socio-linguistics of Modern English," and where the sole mode of instruction is the information-loaded lecture.

Instrumentally motivated students

The average incoming English major in TW countries is generally highly motivated to study English; however, his motivation is more instrumental than integrative. In other words, his incentives for the study of English are not his intrinsic interest in the language or the literature, nor do they stem from his admiration of Western languages and culture to the point where he would like to be accepted as a member of these communities. Rather, he is deeply interested in the utilitarian aspects of English studies.[2]

What kinds of jobs are anticipated by an English major in a TW country? Studies indicate that most English graduates go into the teaching profession. The rest go into clerical, translation, management, and administrative jobs, where—in the overwhelming majority of cases—their linguistic competence is called upon. Rarely is their knowledge of English literature directly relevant to their work.

2. Attitudinal studies conducted on Arab students such as those by the author and others (Zughoul et al. forthcoming; Zughoul and Taminian 1984; Salih 1980; and Harrison et al. 1975) have consistently shown that Arab students are instrumentally motivated to learn English and that they are well aware of the utility of knowing English. Those studies were corroborated in other TW countries. Lukmani (1972) and Kelkar (1982) in their studies of Indian students, Mazrui (1968, 1972, 1975) in his studies of African students, and Shaw (1983) in his attitudinal study on final-year bachelor-degree students in Singapore, India, and Thailand arrived at the same conclusion. There is a comparable situation in the Philippines. Pickett (1980), depending on data collected by Lewis and Massad (1975) in their IAEEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) English-proficiency study in 10 countries, concludes that on the measures of utility, one can detect some very interesting indicators of motivation. He uses Thailand as an example where "the overwhelming majority of Thais thought English would help them get a good job (88.1%), would be needed for further schooling (89.3%), and would enable them to read what they wanted to read (77.0%)."

Arguments for the study of literature

Now, as Munro (1983) puts the question, "Why should non-native speakers bother to study English literature at all?" Why, given those previously discussed considerations, does a student from a TW country want to study English literature? The traditional view that the study of literature in a liberal arts education broadens the intellectual horizons of the student and sharpens his sensibilities has served as a base as well as a theoretical framework for the teaching of literature in schools and university systems in English-speaking countries. The teaching of literature, according to this view, is defended on the grounds of strong advocacy for the intrinsic values of literature. Mathieson (1975) calls such a view the Victorian educators' belief in the "character building powers of the classical English literature curriculum." One of the earlier strong proponents of this view is Matthew Arnold, who in 1880 maintained that good poetry tends "to form the soul and character," that poetry supersedes religion and philosophy, and who called literature "the greatest power in Education" (Mathieson 1975). Mathieson (1975) also quotes the Newbolt Committee, which was set up after the first world war "out of the anxiety that too little literature was taught in British schools," as saying, "Literature is not just a subject for academic study, but one of the chief temples of the human spirit, in which all should worship." The following two quotations by Bennet and Leavis express this philosophy of English-literature teaching in its strongest version.

> The aim of literary studies is not to amuse the hours of leisure; it is to awake one's self, it is to be alive, to intensify one's capacity for pleasure, for sympathy and for comprehension. . . . An understanding appreciation of literature means an understanding appreciation of the world, and it means nothing else. . . . People who don't want to live, people who would sooner hibernate than feel intensely, will be wise to eschew literature. They had better, to quote from the finest passage in a fine poem, "sit around and eat blackberries." "The sight of a common bush afire with God" might upset their nerves. (Bennet 1909; reprinted 1975)

Leavis defends the teaching of English literature on the following grounds:

> The essential discipline of an English school is the literary-critical; it is a true discipline, only in an English school if anywhere will it be fostered, and it is irreplaceable. It trains, in a way no other discipline can, intelligence and sensibility together, cultivating sensitiveness and precision of response and a delicate integrity of intelligence—intelligence that integrates as well as analyzes and must have pertinacity and staying power as well as delicacy. . . . There is no need to add at the moment, by the way of indicating the inherent educational possibilities of the literary-critical discipline, than that it can, in its peculiar preoccupation with the concrete, provide an incomparably inward and subtle initiation into the nature and significance of tradition. (Widdowson 1975:72–73)

Later on, and especially in the 1930s (Mathieson 1975:26–27), the teaching of English literature was viewed by Leavis and his followers (such as David Holbrook and Peter Abbs) as an effective measure to counteract "the debased exploitative commercial culture" and the "brutalising effects of the cheap press," as well as to fulfill the need for spiritualism in an age "demented in its pursuit for exact knowledge and verifiable answers." As the status of classics and the power of religion declined, English literature was thought to be the answer to industrialism, rationalism, and empiricism (Mathieson 1975:27).[3]

Questionable assumptions

These and similar statements are difficult to accept because of their lack of scientism and because, as Widdowson (1975:73) points out, they "resemble propaganda rather than a reasoned set of proposals." Besides, other disciplines may justifiably claim whatever the "literary-critical" discipline has set out to achieve in terms of the previous quotations. These effects can come about, as Widdowson (1975:74) affirms, "through a heightened awareness of the way language can be used to explore and express realities other than which is communally accepted as the most socially convenient." The signs and clues used in literature are necessarily linguistic.

In addition to that, literary studies (even in British universities) have not been structured to develop such a sensitivity—what is taught at the school and university level is "critical orthodoxy, a set of ready made judgements for rote learning rather than strategies of understanding which can be transferred to other unknown literary works" (Widdowson 1975:75). Widdowson quotes C. S. Lewis (1961) to describe the situation at British universities' literature departments, where "young people are drenched, dizzied and bedevilled by criticism to a point at which primary literary experience is no longer possible." Those students are often preoccupied with other people's interpretation of literature rather than their own.

The question to be posed now is whether it is possible to bring about those effects through the study of other literatures such as Spanish, Arabic, or African. Some chauvinists still maintain that English literature is not only superior to other literatures but is the best literature in the world, and that such effects as those mentioned earlier can be brought about only through the study of English. Nor is such a biased and narrow-minded view restricted to native English speakers. Many nonnative speakers express this view: English literature is to be studied because it is English.

> Needless to say, students of English literature, wherever they are, can be expected to draw from their studies the benefits of "English" as a broad, flexible and liberal discipline, concerned with a literature which is not clearly excelled by any other, either in quality or continuity over a long period of time. (Holloway; quoted by Widdowson 1975:77)[4]

Better reasons for teaching literature

If those arguments are rejected, we are left with two choices, as Widdowson (1975:77) maintains. One of these is to study literature for a cultural purpose, "to acquaint students with ways of looking at the world which characterize the cultures of the English-speaking peoples." In this case, literature becomes a repository of factual data and would be inevitably distorted if taught as such. Moreover, factual knowledge may be better taught using materials other than literature.

The second choice, and also the main justification for teaching English literature in TW universities, Widdowson (1975) concludes, is to teach in terms of its definition as a linguistic subject. Because our students are interested in learning the language per se, they would be interested in seeing how the whole language system is used in the actual business of communication. Literature, in that case, would provide the learner with the "widest variety of syntax, the richest variations of vocabulary discriminations," and would provide examples of language "employed at its most effective, subtle, and suggestive" (Povey 1979:162). In the final analysis, according to Povey, it serves as an encouragement to the "limited linguistic achievement of the foreign student."

Widdowson's approach has received support from many of those who are concerned with the teaching of English literature to foreign students of English. Having discussed the English-language-teaching situation in India, Daswani (1982:99) concludes:

> Given the situation, the university departments of English would have to reform their curricula to meet the changing demands of the society. As more learners come to the universities, traditional English literature courses would have to give way to more realistic courses in English as a language of intergroup and intercountry communication.

3. Abbs (1976:184–85), towards the end of his book on the formulation of English politics, outrageously affirms that we live "in a nervous age; a time of apocalypse, in which every day we witness a further extinction of individual qualities and achievements." He talks about the "pervasive feeling that civilization has disappeared completely," and vehemently calls for the cultivation of poetry in its broadest sense: the creation of symbols, the cultivation of style, and the search for a numinous circumference to counteract the commercial activities "falsely generated by an inhuman economy."

4. The following statement exemplifies the attitudes of the proponents of this view, not only to the "lesser breed," but also to other Westerners and Western languages: "I have no knowledge of either Sanskrit or Arabic. But I am quite ready to take the oriental learning at the valuation of the orientalists themselves. I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. . . . The claim of our own language is hardly necessary to recapitulate. It stands pre-eminent even among the languages of the West. . . . Whoever knows that language has ready access to all the vast intellectual wealth which all the wisest nations of the earth have created and hoarded in the course of ninety generations" (The Honorable T. B. Macaulay; quoted by Daswani 1982).

Strevens (1978:60) theorizes that the principal justification for teaching the English language 20 years ago was to introduce the students to the study and appreciation of English literature, but the strength of this justification "has evaporated" in favor of a much stronger reason—the language's evident usefulness and practicality. Literature, however, still retains a place for arts-oriented students.

Rodger (1983), of the University of Edinburgh, agrees with this view. He maintains that literature constitutes a special domain of linguistic communication. While both nonliterary and literary communication use conventionally appropriate language for communication, the latter uses signals to mark the literary quality of its messages. In other words, creative writers have developed special conventions of poetic, novelistic, and dramatic communication to make their messages stand out against "linguistically normal, non-literary discourse." Consequently, Rodger views the student of English literature in a second-language setting as needing the knowledge of how to recognize the special conventions that operate in the domain of literary communication (which are usually more implicit than explicit) and how to make sense of what authors of literature exploit in the code to convey meaning. "Communication awareness" and "language consciousness" are skills needed by foreign students.

Along these lines, Moody (1983:25–36) proposes a model for the teaching of English literature based on a theory of literature. Two dimensions for that approach, the extrinsic and the intrinsic, are further detailed to produce what Rodger calls communication awareness and language consciousness. The extrinsic component deals with the external factors in a literary piece, and includes the biographical, historical, aesthetic, and philosophical levels. The intrinsic component deals with the internal factors, which include the grammatical, lexical, structural, and cultural levels.

Munro (1983:60–61), who has had long experience teaching English literature in the Middle East, strongly supports an approach similar to Widdowson's. He believes that the teaching of English language is inseparable from the teaching of English literature; however, he feels that the primary concern of a teacher of English as a foreign literature is to "concentrate on the literary texts themselves, clarifying their meaning and assisting students to perceive the precision and vitality of the language the author has employed." By teaching English literature this way, Munro believes the student will have a far greater, richer, deeper, more comprehensive understanding of the English language. "If TEFL is important," Munro concludes, "TEFLIT is equally so."

The trend of teaching literature for a linguistic purpose seems to be gaining ground in different parts of the world. In a recent issue of the *English Teaching Forum*, most of the articles were devoted to practical, in-class techniques for implementing this trend. Prodromou (1985) and Gonzalez (1985) are particular examples of that trend.

It should be made clear at this point that a major preoccupation of the English department in a TW country should always be the provision of an all-around education to the student rather than the restricted provision of language training. However, there will be a number of students (that number may not exceed three to five percent in my estimation) whose aptitude and serious interests lie in the study of literature. These students may have the potential to be creative writers in English or in their native languages. In addition, there may be the same number of students who have the potential and the intention to go to English-speaking countries for postgraduate study in English literature. For those two groups of students, Pratt (1982) suggests the establishment of an honors track in the department that would cater to the interests of this group. These students can also be identified early and sent to an institute in the country that serves their interests and needs, or they can be sent directly to English-speaking countries for literature degrees.

Proposed shifts in emphasis

The foregoing arguments should not imply advocacy of the exclusion of the literature component from our programs. On the contrary, if criteria are well established for such inclusion, the literary component can serve as a motivating factor instead of being an impediment to the progress of the student. It will certainly make the study of literature an enjoyable exercise in appreciation rather than "take on the character of a mysterious and perversely roundabout way."

The teaching of English literature with those objectives in mind necessitates shifts of emphasis from the old to the modern and contemporary, from aesthetic or historic to pedagogic criteria of inclusion. In genre this means a switch from poetry to prose.

Because of the preoccupation of academicians with the spatial view of literature development, it has been considered a standard practice in English departments in TW countries to correlate the chronological development of English literature with the four-year program so that a student starts to study modern or contemporary literature in his fourth year. Pratt (1982) gives the example of Polish universities, where first-year students were to study medieval English literature in their first year and modern literature in their fifth year, and cites the British Council's suggestion that "the entire syllabus be stood on its head." Reversing the chronology could be more helpful to our students than starting with Chaucer and ending up with contemporary literature. In fact, it has been the writer's experience as a student of literature and later on as a teacher of language that

the study of medieval literature in the freshman or sophomore years is a painful exercise that rarely goes beyond glossing vocabulary items on the margins of the text. Harrison (1974:55) strongly suggests the avoidance of literature that is "the fossilized droppings of another age, included for vaguely felt reasons of historical completeness," and "to the argument that one would be cutting off students from the roots of English culture the reply is that although English culture may be unique, it is not of unique importance to all; people have their own cultures to worry about." Harrison concludes that the study of English literature "as all-embracing a historical perspective as desired" is a specialist study that may suit postgraduate students.

In this connection, Pratt's (1982) criterion of "accessibility" seems to be practical, appealing, and realistic. It also serves the purpose of language teaching/learning best, especially in the early years of study at the English department. By accessibility, Pratt means the correlation of "literary and linguistic case difficulty" to the neglect of theme, genre, or chronology as criteria of selection. The criterion of accessibility is further detailed by Harrison (1974), who recommends as a first criterion for the inclusion of literature that:

> . . . there be no discontinuity between the lexis, structure and style of the literature and the lexis, structure and style already mastered by the student. Literature is not initial teaching material, nor, if the student is to gain aesthetic experience analogous to that achievable by the native speaker, should it be done to death by linguistic exercises or the need for constant dictionary references.

The other shift of emphasis that should be made is from the teaching of poetry to the inclusion of prose, preferably modern prose. To fulfill the objectives outlined earlier, students in TW universities need to study lengthy discourse instead of spending that time on the study of poetry. The author (Zughoul 1983) drew on research evidence from the fields of linguistics and stylistics to support his advocacy of avoiding poetry in favor of prose. Poetry sometimes deviates from natural language or common language to the point where one questions the validity of its inclusion in the English department in a TW country on a wide scale. "The violation of the norm of the standard, its systematic violation," the Prague school of linguistics (Freeman 1977) affirms, "is what makes possible the poetic utilization of language; without this possibility there would be no poetry." Within the generative transformational framework, the grammar of natural languages cannot account for these deviations (Freeman 1977). Corder (1976) considers the language of poetry as an idiosyncratic dialect in the same class with those of the learner of a foreign language, the infant learning his mother tongue, and the speech of an aphasic, which share the characteristics of being unstable, transitional, different from social dialects, and which need peculiar sets of rules to account for their generation.[5]

Again, the writer does not advocate the exclusion of poetry from the curriculum of the English department in a TW country. What is being advocated is a lessening of emphasis on poetry in favor of more modern prose. Moreover, there must be poetry in English that is appealing and linguistically meets our criterion, even partly. Eastman (1969:57) talks about a new trend, which he calls the "cult of unintelligibility in modern poetry," which "decreases the range, volume and definiteness of communication." Such poetry may discourage the student and create negative attitudes towards poetry as a genre; so it is to be avoided.

A plea for appropriate content

Measures should be taken to ensure that the content of the literature taught is appropriate in a TW English department. Teaching English literature to students in the TW is strewn with a variety of problems. Dahiyyat (1983) and Asfoor (1983) talk about a number of cultural, moral, and national barriers that can be serious impediments confronting Arab students of English literature. These same barriers might face students in other TW countries. What is recommended here is the avoidance of literature that is imperialistic, racist, or which conflicts directly with the moral, ethical, and social codes of the students.

Using more of the literature written by native authors in some TW countries may help to ensure that the content is acceptable to the student and relevant to his experience. In this connection, Harrison (1974:47) advocates more use of literature written in English by native authors. He believes that the novels of Chinua Achebe or the plays of Wole Soyinka present no problem of background to Nigerian students, for example; the novels of R. K. Narayan would be much more readily comprehensible to Indian students than those of Sir Walter Scott. Harrison concludes by giving still another example:

> I have on my desk a book called "Tales from the Copperbelt," the results of a short story competition among ordinary Zambians, not professional authors. Although some of the stories might not be of very high literary merit, they do at least mirror the lives and aspirations of Zambians

5. Lott (1983:102) gives examples from Dylan Thomas's "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" of deviations from normal English syntax, which he later calls "exceptional, even excellent." Those deviations may be acceptable for a native speaker, or for someone who takes real interest in the study of literature, but they are definitely not that "exceptional" and "excellent" for a foreign student in an English department in a TW country. Harrison (1974), after studying a well-known poem by Thomas Nashe ("Spring the Sweet Spring . . ."), concludes that the poem is a "very good recipe for structural and semantic confusion, because of its grammatical bugbears on the structural level and archaic usage on the lexical level." Having taught the poem, Harrison had the impression that "it was at best an exercise in ritual and incantatory mysticism," and that his students could not get any aesthetic or other worthwhile literary experience.

much more closely than anything by Galsworthy, Antony Hope, or Conan Doyle.

Discussing "irrelevance" inherent in the teaching of English literature to foreign learners, Mukherjee (1982:35) asserts that the English-literature student gets so accustomed to reading books that relate to another society and another culture with very little exposure to literature that relates to his own world that "gradually the verbal world begins to seem more real than the extensional world." Such a situation obscures the means through which a student might relate to the real contexts of his own environment and his own culture. Even literary critics in such a situation, maintains Mukherjee, take their premises from books, apply them to other books, and finally record them in yet another book. "At no stage in the process do the ideas emerge out of the books to touch life."

It can be concluded that a department of general English where language, literature, linguistics, and methodology components are incorporated to build up the linguistic competence of the graduate and prepare him to take a job to meet the needs of his community is what suits a TW country. In contrast to English-speaking countries, though, literature is taught for a linguistic purpose in TW English departments. Such an approach to teaching literature also requires that shifts of emphasis be made and selection measures exercised on the inclusion of literature in the syllabus. Students who have special aptitude and take special interest in the study of literature can be sent to an English-speaking country or to a special literature institute or department in TW countries.

It is understandable that change in TW educational institutions could be difficult and slow paced because a whole generation of old-timers running those institutions may feel more secure with the established patterns. However, it is time for those to realize, as Bordie (1985) points out, that "the application of old, somewhat stereotyped procedures to existing situations is not likely to lead to meaningful or beneficial solutions if only because older procedures have been superseded by procedures which relate directly to present day needs." Indeed, "solving today's problems with yesterday's answers is what has gotten us into the bind we are in now."

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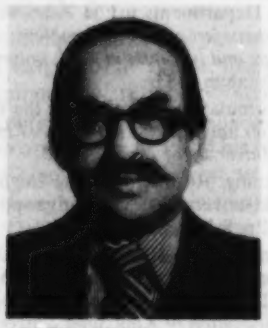
Language versus Literature in University English Departments

JOSEPH JOHN
Yarmouk University



JOSEPH JOHN is presently on the teaching staff of the English Department, Yarmouk University, Jordan. Previously he was an assistant professor of English at Marquette University, Wisconsin, where he received a Ph.D. in 1974. He has also taught English in India, Sri Lanka, Singapore, and Ethiopia. Dr. John's articles have appeared in several journals.

A debate is in progress in Arab academia on the respective roles of "language" and "literature" in teaching English to Arab students. Papers have been presented in seminars and conferences bewailing the preponderance of literature courses over language/linguistics courses in the English programs of Arab universities. Demands have been made for a reduction in the number of literature courses so as to correct the imbalance. In a paper read at the University of Jordan, for instance, the author asserted that "so much literature was the cause of the failure of the English department to achieve its major objective: graduating competent English specialists who are badly needed in our society because of the need for English as a language of science, technology, business, and international communication" (Zughoul 1982).

The call for an increase in language/linguistics courses is understandable in view of the trend towards increasing use of the linguistics approach to the teaching of English in countries with non-English backgrounds. And the stress on the need for "competent English specialists" is, of course, eminently realistic in terms of the present-day needs of the Arab world. All the same, the question needs to be asked: How is competence to be achieved? Can it be achieved by reducing the number of literature courses and increasing the number of language/linguistics courses? I believe it cannot be, and I maintain that any English program aiming to produce competent English specialists must be characterized by a preponderance of literature courses over language/linguistics courses. No amount of literature taught as a means of promoting students' competence in the use of language can be excessive; on the other hand, exclusive or excessive preoccupation with the grammatical and linguistic aspects of writing could be counterproductive.

To begin with, in order to produce graduates who are capable of using English effectively, the English departments must have programs that will enable students to attain the highest possible proficiency in grammar, idiom, vocabulary, and syntax. In such a program, a certain number of language/linguistics courses has a legitimate place, but too many such courses are not likely to enhance the students' competence as users of English. Widdowson (1975:3), himself a linguist, has this to say on the matter: "The linguist would be the first to complain if everyone who talked about language claimed to be talking linguistics."

Widdowson's remark indicates his awareness of the limitations of linguistics as a means of teaching language —limitations that seriously impair the efficacy of the linguistics approach to language teaching. I shall now examine these limitations as they bear on the proficiency that students must gain in grammar, idiom, vocabulary, and syntax.

Grammar

In regard to grammar, while courses in language and linguistics render an invaluable service by helping the student understand the structural complexities of language, nevertheless, there is no such thing as a complete grammar of a living language, and, even if there were, there would be hundreds of literary uses that would not conform to the grammatical rules formulated by linguists. For a knowledge of the dimensions of language in its supragrammatical aspects, one has to turn to literature. While linguists generally designate these dimensions as "deviations" from the norm, they are often peak utterances that reveal the power of the written word at its most felicitous and articulate. Any approach to written language that denigrates its loftiest achievements as "deviations" has obvious limitations. The "nameless graces" that Pope attributes to poetry are the indefinable qualities of all good writing—qualities that defy linguistic analysis. These graces are not so much taught as imbibed through close acquaintance with great literature.

Besides, the effectiveness of language, whether formal discourse or ordinary communication, spans the whole range of undefined ground between grammaticality and ungrammaticality, and no grammar, however extensive, can cover that ground entirely. As Widdowson (1975:27) puts it, "A grammar purports to represent a speaker's knowledge of his language so that what is ungrammatical should in principle make no sense. But ungrammatical sentences in literary writing do make sense and a poem which deviates from grammatical rules as text is nevertheless interpretable as discourse." And, in an even stronger statement: "Grammarians sometimes talk as if it is only poets, children, and foreign learners who do not conform to the rules of the language code, but as far as selection restriction rules are concerned, at least very few language users are in fact strictly bound by them. It is for this reason that grammars cannot account for all aspects of language use" (Widdowson 1975:35–36). The same idea is echoed by Crystal and Davy (1974:78) in their discussion of certain aspects of language "which the linguist, *qua* linguist, is not competent to assess" because they "require specification with reference to qualitative, non-linguistic criteria."

Good writing in English involves degrees of excellence beyond mere grammatical correctness. Knowledge of the rules of grammar and other formal aspects of language hardly suffices to instill in students an awareness of the full range of its expressive potential. I am not ignoring the fact that in modern linguistics "grammar" is a far more inclusive term than in traditional approaches to the subject, but in practical terms, from the standpoint of students as recipients of the writing skills accruing from a knowledge of linguistics, the ground covered is not substantially different from that of traditional grammar, notwithstanding the newfangled terminologies that lend a semblance of novelty to the concepts and strategies used in linguistically oriented approaches to the teaching of English.

Idiom

At any rate, even if there were grammars that could adequately account for all aspects of language use, there would still be the disconcerting fact that a knowledge of grammar constitutes but a minimum requirement for the ability to use language effectively. It is easy enough to learn the rules of grammar, but more important are the nuances of idiom and usage that often elude the nonnative learner. It is only from a mastery of the idiomatic norms of English that the student's writing can derive the extragrammatical graces that are characteristic of good writing. What I am speaking about here is not grammatically flawless writing, which is not hard to achieve, but idiomatically sound, and therefore good, English.

The "Englishness" of English is essentially a matter of its idiom, and it is guarded not so much by the *do*s and *don't*s of grammar as by "those peculiar turns of mind and corresponding quirks of expression which constitute the genius of the language" (John 1959). Paradoxically—and this is the crux of the problem for the nonnative learner—it often happens that what is grammatically correct is idiomatically unacceptable and vice versa. Mere grammatical correctness is not what makes for good English. A split infinitive or an unattached participle or a double superlative does not militate against true idiomatic correctness or render an expression un-English as does an inchoate phraseology induced by an alien idiom of thought. This alien idiom is more or less a matter of unconscious interference from the foreign learner's mother tongue. In the conflict between mother tongue and target language, the idiom of the latter tends to retreat before its more powerful rival. Victory for the mother tongue means, alas, defeat for the eager learner of English! It is here that he finds himself on the most treacherous ground, and it is here, too, that he receives the least assistance from the linguist and the grammarian.

The truth is that idiom represents one of the least adequately dealt with areas in modern linguistics studies. More interest has been taken in it recently, but for the foreign learner a knowledge of the taxonomy or idiosyncrasy of idiom can be of little assistance in taming its recalcitrant elements. Classification of idioms into "tournure idioms," "irreversible binomial idioms," "plural verb idioms," "proverbial idioms," etc., by Adam Makkai (1972), for instance, is no doubt a valuable contribution to our formal knowledge of idioms and their reciprocal affinities and differences, but

whether such knowledge is likely to contribute significantly to the idiomaticity of the foreign learner's writing is certainly debatable.

Neither can the student help himself by learning by heart a lot of idiomatic expressions unless he also learns to use them correctly. This is not an easy task, because the correct use of such expressions depends on the appropriateness of the contexts in which they are used. As Wilkins (1977:129) points out, "The appropriateness of idiom to situation is very difficult to master, and where a student has acquired idioms through the memorization of lists of them it is usually apparent through his inability to restrict their use to the appropriate circumstances."

Besides, since idiomatic expressions (such as *head over heels,* and *at sixes and sevens*) cannot be brought within the logical categories of grammar and linguistic analysis, the grammarian and the linguist can offer scant assistance to the foreign learner in his attempts to grapple with the formidable problems involved. No less formidable are the difficulties deriving from the arbitrary nature of locutions formed by attaching adverbial particles to verbs, such as *cry up, cry down, bear on, bear out,* etc. Even more fraught with pitfalls for the foreign learner is the hazardous terrain of usage where the rational axioms of grammar and linguistics can be of little service to him. This is particularly true of the vagaries of usage associated with the use (or non-use) of articles and prepositions. Thus, for instance, if a foreign learner wrote *I looked at him straight in the eye* and was baffled when told to omit the preposition *at,* the grammarian would be hard put to explain why *at* should be deleted; all he could say is that using *at* in this case is not in keeping with usage. Furthermore, an idiomatic variable may defy the semantic logic of a lexical item. The expression *I won't be long* (meaning *I'll be right back* or *I won't take a long time*) may well violate the learner's semantic sense until he can dissociate the lexical meaning of *long* from its idiomatic meaning in this context.

In short, English is replete with collocations of words whose co-occurrence is a matter of usage or idiom, and is therefore inexplicable in terms of grammar or linguistic analysis. And yet it is the arbitrary and irrational elements of usage and idiom that constitute the quintessential "Englishness" of English. A reasonable degree of competence in using English correctly and effectively depends on an adequate mastery of these elements. The best way to gain such mastery is through intimate familiarity with idioms within the contextual vitality of creative literature.

Vocabulary

Next to idiom and usage, there is no area in the teaching of English where the inadequacy of linguistics is so evident as in that of vocabulary. Linguists, says Wilkins (1977:109), "view language as a structured system, and their preoccupation has been almost entirely with those aspects of language whose structure is most susceptible to scientific analogy—phonology and grammar. Linguists have had remarkably little to say about vocabulary, and one can find very few studies which could be of any practical interest for language teachers." Linguists' preoccupation with grammar and phonology has led to the "subordination of vocabulary teaching to grammar teaching" (Wilkins 1977:109). It is true, of course, that by merely building up a vocabulary in a foreign language one cannot hope to use the language well, but it is also true that knowledge of grammar without an adequate vocabulary could serve little purpose. In other words, "while without grammar very little can be said, without vocabulary *nothing* can be conveyed" (Wilkins 1977:111). A satisfactory balance between grammar and lexis is, therefore, in order.

Aside from the relative neglect of vocabulary resulting from the linguist's preoccupation with grammar and phonology, there is the additional fact that the research done on vocabulary selection "does not add to our understanding of the lexical structure of the language under examination" (Wilkins 1977:112). Studies in the frequency of lexical items within psychological, social, and political contexts are no better in terms of their practical use in language learning.

The inadequacy of linguistics in dealing with the lexical structure of language is further compounded by its inability to take into account *all* of the intralinguistic relations of words within their semantic context, especially in terms of their connotation as distinguished from their denotation. It is easy enough to explain the denotative meanings of words; it is not so easy, however, to explain their connotative meanings. This is because, as Wilkins (1977:122) suggests, the connotation of a word is "partly the product of associations, linguistic and nonlinguistic, that have been built up through our previous experience of the word. . . . It is altogether more concerned with the attitudes of the language user, his emotional reactions to the use of a word." Wilkins (1977:122) uses the synonyms *abandon* and *relinquish* to illustrate this point. Using the two words in these sentences, *He abandoned his post* and *He relinquished his post,* he comments: "The strong implication of blame which is present in the first sentence is completely absent from the second. Since we share the contexts in which language is used with other members of our culture, it is not surprising that much of the connotative meaning of words is also shared." The implication of this for the nonnative learner is obvious: Due to his cultural otherness, his ability to share with the native speaker the connotations of the words he reads will be extremely limited. Unfortunately, linguists cannot provide the cultural nexus needed in this case. It is only through continued contact with writing aimed specifically at native speakers that the nonnative learner "will

begin to acquire some of the connotations that it has for the native speaker" (Wilkins 1977:123).

In addition, despite the vast body of writing on semantics available to students, it is doubtful whether a knowledge of the areas of semantic inquiry such as etymology, synonymy, antonymy, ambiguity, semantic change, etc., will substantially help them write better unless their formal knowledge of these is reinforced by direct acquaintance with words and their connotations in the living context of literature.

Syntax

It must be admitted that in the area of syntax, as in phonology, linguistics has much to offer the foreign learner of English. Modern linguistics, by analyzing and unraveling the complexities of sentence formation, has pushed the frontiers of our knowledge of syntax beyond the broad generalizations of traditional grammar. A knowledge of the insights provided by linguists is bound to help the learner eliminate ungrammatical elements from his writing. In addition, he will be encouraged by an awareness of the room for individual "creativity" available within the patterns indicated by the rules formulated by linguists. Furthermore, within the relatively spacious ambit of this creativity, a set of rules could be used to produce "sentences as complex as those found in the writing of Proust and as simple as those found in Hemingway" (Wilkins 1977:72).

All the same, there are certain considerations that seem to detract considerably from the learner's ability to profit by the theoretic speculations of the linguist. The structures devised by the linguist to illustrate sentence patterns, impressive as they are as examples of syntactic gerrymandering or semantic hairsplitting, cannot be of much practical use to the learner in achieving syntactic maturity in his writing. Besides, a considerable portion of the labors of linguists tends to consist in the mere substitution of new linguistic terminologies for old grammatical terms. For example, the term *predicate complementation,* which a linguist may use to describe the underlined clause in *They discovered that he was a thief,* is but a new name for what the traditional grammarian would call a noun clause, object of the verb *discovered.* The substitution of terms like *matrix sentence* and *constituent sentence* for the *main clause* and *subordinate clause* respectively of traditional grammar is another example of old wine in new bottles!

How literature can help

From what has been said above about the inadequacies of linguistics in the areas of grammar, idiom, vocabulary, and syntax, it should be obvious that a program of studies dominated by linguistics is likely to suffer from a great many shortcomings that would render it incapable of producing graduates who are reasonably competent as users of English. What linguistics cannot do for the nonnative learner of English can be done only by literature. Massive exposure to the best that has been written in English in the form of poetry, drama, fiction, criticism, the essay, and other nonfiction prose of a creative kind is not an option but a desideratum. Creative writing, as noted above, is writing at its most effective, and not to have enough exposure to such writing is a clear disadvantage for the nonnative learner. Extensive and intensive study of literature will make up for the deficiencies of the linguistic approach.

Thus, for instance, the failure of linguistics to deal adequately with the idiomatic norms of English can be made up for by familiarity with English literature, where one finds English at its idiomatic best. The deficiency of linguistics in promoting vocabulary acquisition can be made good by carefully observing and studying the connotations of words as used most exemplarily in literature and by imbibing the graces of diction and style to be found in the great masters of language. What linguistics cannot impart to the learner in terms of the need for syntactic sophistication and semantic amplitude can be acquired by emulating the splendid examples of them to be found (and found abundantly) only in literature.

The issue here is clearly one between theory and praxis. Courses in language and linguistics, concentrating as they do on the theoretic aspects of language, can do no more than provide a knowledge of the rules and principles that make for correctness in writing. As stated earlier, grammatical correctness, however important, is but one of the requirements of effective writing. Only a knowledge of literature can give students an active awareness of the extragrammatical excellences that make for good writing.

The distinction often made between the theologian and the mystic may be used here analagously to make the point clearer. A theologian, it is said, is one who knows *about* God, whereas a mystic is one who *knows God.* In like manner, a student of linguistics learns *about* language, while a student of literature *learns language* as used in poetry, drama, fiction, or any other genre. The difference is similar to that between reading *about* a play in a critical article and actually reading or seeing a play acted on the stage. In one case, the experience is derivative and remote; in the other, it is direct and immediate.

Long before the rise of modern linguistics, Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406), the great Arab philosopher-historian, had much to say on the question of grammar versus literature. In the *Prolegomena* (Issawi, trans. 1950:151–52), he wrote:

> *A skill in that* [i.e., *the Arabic*] *language is not the same thing as a knowledge of Arabic grammar, and can dispense with the latter.* This is because Arabic grammar consists of the knowledge of the laws and patterns underlying that skill. It is therefore knowledge *about* the skill, but not *of*

> the skill; in other words, it is not the mastery of the skill itself. It is as though a man knew the theory but not the practice of a craft; thus, for instance, someone who knew much about sewing, without actually being able to sew, would describe its processes as follows: "It is the putting of thread into the eye of the needle followed by the sticking of the needle into the two edges of the cloth . . . " with a full description of the different operations involved. Such a person, however, if asked to do some actual sewing, would be incapable of doing anything. . . .
>
> The same is true of the relation between the laws of grammatical analysis and parsing and the mastery of the actual skill in the language. For the knowlege of grammar is the knowledge of the mode of procedure. Hence we often find eminent grammarians, who know all the rules, yet when asked to write two lines to a brother or friend, or a letter making a request or complaint, commit many errors and are unable to find the right words to express their meaning or put these words into the proper forms of construction. Conversely, we find many who have mastered the art of writing Arabic verse and prose and who yet are incapable of distinguishing between subject and predicate or nominative and dative, knowing nothing at all about the rules of grammar.

Grammar, according to Ibn Khaldun, is not language; it is only the rules of language. He criticizes those who study the "bare rules of language without examples of prose or verse" (p. 152), and he chides those who "approach the study of Arabic in the same way as any science . . . so that grammar has almost become part of Logic or Dialectics . . . losing its connection with idiom and living speech . . . " (p. 153).

Ibn Khaldun's stress on "examples of prose or verse" clearly indicates his belief that it is only from literature that the student can obtain the writing skills he seeks. This point is stressed repeatedly by the great philosopher. He insists that the best way for anyone to become skillful in writing Arabic is to "learn by heart examples of their [i.e., early Arabic] speech, taken from the Koran, Hadith, verses and rhymed prose of the pre-Islamic and early Islamic writers, until, having learned much of their prose and verse, he will become like one who has grown up among them and learned directly from them to express himself" (p. 153). These remarks have relevance to the conscious, semi-conscious, and even unconscious absorption and assimilation of the graces of style resulting from the exposure of the nonnative learner of a language to the literature of that language. This process is analoguous to the unconscious and intuitive apprehension by the native speaker of the extragrammatical idiomatic norms of his mother tongue.

In the light of Ibn Khaldun's wise pronouncements on the language-versus-literature issue, the argument against literature should be seen as untenable. His stress on the study of Arabic literature as a "must" for learners of Arabic who seek to gain the skills required for effective writing in Arabic points to the fact that the study of English literature is no less essential for Arabic learners of English aiming to become "competent English specialists who are badly needed" in today's Arab world. It follows, then, that the greater the number of literature courses taught in the English departments, the greater will be the opportunity for students to enhance their competence as users of English. Ibn Khaldun's eloquent testimony to the supreme value of literature studies as a rich source of language skills offers the most convincing answer to complaints about the preponderance of literature courses in the English programs of Arab universities.

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Literature in English: An Integral Part of the EFL Curriculum

DU RUIQING
Xi'an Foreign Languages Institute

DU RUIQING is a lecturer in English as a foreign language at Xi'an Foreign Languages Institute, Xi'an, China. He holds an M.A. in English from Sydney University, Australia, and is now lecturing on modern English and American fiction to advanced English majors. Mr. Du's publications include papers on American and English literature and translations, and his main research interests are modern English and American literature and comparative culture.

Over the past few years courses in literature in English have been offered one after another in universities and foreign-language institutes throughout China. According to the data from a 1983 forum,[1] 22 literature courses ranging through all genres and periods are operative either as compulsory or elective courses.[2] Some of the 20 institutions surveyed offered as many as six literature courses. There is no institution that did not include literature of some kind in its curriculum. And almost all of these courses were conducted in English. Such a scope of offerings is a welcome sign that signifies marked progress in China's EFL teaching and learning. It demonstrates that EFL teaching in China has already gone beyond mere training in the practical skills of listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. To begin with, teachers of English have rid themselves of the fetters that bound them during the years of the "cultural revolution" and have become more knowledgeable about the literature of major English-speaking countries; therefore, they feel more confident in lecturing on it. Second, the students now have a much better command of English, and in their third and fourth years as undergraduates they are ready for something more sophisticated and challenging. Besides, there is a crying need for more "rounded" graduates in English to contribute to the nation's "four modernizations" drive.

So it seems there is no problem about the relevance of literature in English in China's EFL curriculum; it is assured a secure place. What, then, is the rationale behind so many literature-course offerings? In what way should literature in English be taught to EFL learners in the Chinese context? How can the students best benefit from the course?

The role of literature

Undergraduate English majors in China are expected to be competent in two areas: they should have a good command of the target language—a mastery of the skills of listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing—and a knowledge of the culture, literature, and history of the countries in which the target language is spoken natively, or some training in management, journalism, or foreign trade. This twofold objective necessitates two kinds of courses: skills and content. The first two years are usually devoted to training in the practical skills, with a few content courses thrown in either in Chinese or in English. The last two years are designed to broaden the students' knowledge through content-course offerings, while continuing the training

1. A forum held in Beijing on the teaching of English to senior undergraduate English majors attended by representatives from 25 universities and colleges.

2. See Li Yanfu, "An Analysis of the Twenty Syllabuses for Third- and Fourth-Year English Curriculum in Universities and Foreign Language Institutes," *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, Number 1 (General Serial No. 57), March 1984, p. 53.

in practical skills. Whatever the division, language acquisition and competence are the major concern. Without proficiency in the target language, competence in other areas is impossible.

Here literature has a role to play—as a "reinforcement device" (Allen 1965:296). Language, as many have argued, is not separable from literature. Literature demonstrates language in use at its best. It is in literature that an English major finds an abundance of excellent examples of the subtle, elusive, and complex use of the grammar and vocabulary of English. As Eagleson and Kramer (1976:40) state:

> Since language is the medium of literature, then literature by its very nature is going to furnish us with evidence on the operation of language. If we are interested in grammatical structure, then we can find abundant data in literature, and not only of regular but also irregular patterns: . . . Light can be thrown on meaning, on the extension of vocabulary and the structure of the vocabulary, on the processes of word formation, on changing attitudes to language forms and on the relation between the written and the spoken word.

When the student is ready to tackle literature in English, his command of the language is already considerable, but not yet secure. There may be lexical and syntactic difficulties. But through reading he develops a better feel for the language and reinforces his command of it, and therefore improves his overall proficiency in it. A good part of the purpose of teaching literature in English is to sharpen awareness of the medium and to help the student understand and react to the medium at its subtlest. "The teaching of language needs literature among its prime material" (Quirk 1975:6).

It has been proved that better language users are, as a rule, assiduous readers. This is the case with both Chinese-language learning and foreign-language learning. Literature and language are complementary. It is certainly the right procedure to teach the English language along with literature written in that language, as is traditionally done in China's teaching and learning of foreign languages. The inclusion and prominence of literature in EFL are of particular pertinence and significance in China, which has a time-honored literary tradition.

Literature and understanding

Language and literature are parts of a whole. In the study of language, literature should be there as a "handmaiden." But language and literature are different and so require different treatment. To learn a language is to develop skills; to learn the literature written in that language is to understand it. Literature is the product of a particular culture, and it functions as a model of that culture. It not only provides the language at its subtlest, but also serves as a valuable means of attaining cultural insights. Language is culture-bound; literature is more so. The present curriculum for English majors in their last two years incorporates the laying of a solid foundation in English with the expansion of knowledge. A nation's language invariably reflects and expresses its culture, so some awareness of the culture of English-speaking countries is indispensable to a desirable command of English. Here again, literature has a role to play—a role that helps to broaden cultural and intellectual understanding. And conversely, the cultural and intellectual orientation facilitates the understanding of the literature written in that language. In *David Copperfield* Peggoty is described as having "very dark eyes and red cheeks like apples." A Chinese reader, ignorant of Western standards, might think that she is not bad looking. After all, dark eyes and red cheeks were and still are, to a certain extent, regarded as important elements of beauty. In D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers,* which is included in my course Selected Readings in Modern English Fiction, there is a detail that is likely to escape the students' attention:

> He [Paul] pulled his cigarette-case from his pocket. Beatrice looked inside it.
>
> "And fancy me having Connie's last cig," said Beatrice, putting the thing between her teeth. He held a lit match to her, and she puffed daintily.

Lighting a cigarette for a young lady is generally considered flirtatious by old Chinese standards, whereas in Western culture a man is supposed to be chivalrous, especially when he is in the company of ladies. So here Paul, though from a miner's family, is fairly well educated and comparatively well mannered, quite unlike his father, who is rough and uncouth. This bit of cultural information helps Chinese English majors understand in greater depth the novel and its characters. Again, in Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady,* we have Gilbert Osmond, who remains seated while his hostess, Madame Merle, stands before him when they are discussing at length something grave and important, a scene which alerts Isabel to the illicit relationship between the two vile characters and the conspiracy to "marry her for her money." If the lecturer is astute enough to draw the students' attention to the fact that a lady usually remains seated when talking to a man in a sitting room, particularly when they are alone, a great deal can be deduced from this anomaly. In a sense, to teach literature is to teach that part of culture on which the writing is based.

Literature is a way of knowing—knowing the people and the world secondhand. In addition to extracting lexical and structural meanings from the text, a foreign-language learner, with the help and guidance of the teacher, also familiarizes himself with the social and cultural aspects of meanings and situations. Literature provides a way of rising above one's cultural limitations and discovering and acquiring both insight and richer experience. For example, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* provides glimpses of the colonial exploitation and plunder of the Congo; Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* tells about complicated human relationships; E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* shows the gap between the native Indians and the English; Graham Greene's *The Power and the Glory* unfolds in an artistic way the polit-

ical strife and religious persecution in Mexico in the 1920s; Evelyn Waugh's *A Handful of Dust* depicts the breakdown of a society for lack of spiritual substance. Such understanding will benefit the students in whatever work they undertake after completing their studies.

The student factor

The place of literature in the EFL curriculum is determined by its role in language-skill reinforcement and in cultural orientation. Also there is the student factor to consider. Little or nothing will be achieved if, because of insufficient command of English, the students are not ready for it or for some reason they do not have much affinity for it. English majors who pass the rigid and highly competitive matriculation examinations have been exposed to English (no matter how limited this exposure may be) for five to six years in high schools (called middle schools in China). Therefore they need not start their first year in a university or college at the level of the mere fundamentals of the language. In their first two years they must cope with a formidable reading list—mostly literature in simplified versions. This paves the way for their reading of literature in the original in the following two years. So there is no problem about their not being able to understand most of the prescribed reading in literature in English.

There does exist some confusion of aims for the training of English majors. But whatever aspirations they have and whatever employment they might get, the students like literature, both for the experience and the enjoyment. Responses to my questionnaires from English majors in Xi'an's five universities and colleges all testify to this. Of the 58 students who responded to my questions 42 indicated a "strong liking" for and a "great interest" in literature, for they see literature as an "inexhaustible source of language phenomena and experience of life." Some made it a very definite point that since they have majored in English, there is no reason why they should not equip themselves with "the best that has been written." The rest of the students surveyed expressed moderate interest because they are pretty sure that they will be assigned to a teaching position in some remote middle school or that they might be called on to translate technical material that does not involve much knowledge of, or experience in, literature. But one of the latter says: "It is not that I don't like literature. I know that literature is useful and enlightening. But for the sake of my family I'll be returning to my hometown, which is in a mountainous area and has no English literature in the original available. So what's the use of studying it?" Well, she should, perhaps, make the fullest use of her time and lay her hands on whatever available literature in English she can get hold of before she goes back to her hometown.

Science majors also participated in my survey. Interestingly enough, their responses were all positive. They find literature "enriching, exhilarating, and relaxing," though they do not have as much time at their disposal for literature.

Given the population of the country and this enthusiasm for English, perhaps it is not too preposterous to assume that China is the biggest country in the world where English is learned as a foreign language. As there is great potential in China for the use of English, there is, for certain, great potential for literature in English, too.

Planning the literature course

The question we must ask, then, is how a full-scale English-language program can best incorporate a meaningful program of literature in English within its total framework. At one end of the spectrum a literature course should not degenerate into a language course in spite of the important ancillary role it plays in language learning. *Literature should be treated as literature, not as an additional language-learning exercise.* It should aim at a knowledge of selected major works representative of the principal genres and major trends and periods in the literature of major English-speaking countries.

This does not mean, however, that no language points should be tackled. They must be taken up when they are a barrier to understanding. At the other end of the spectrum, it is not practicable for undergraduate English majors to aim at literary scholarship. The objective should, instead, be *literary experience.* Maximum benefit will be derived if literature courses are conducted in such a way that they are neither language courses for practical skills nor literature courses with a view to specialization in literature. We should aim somewhere in between. It is not justifiable to demand that an undergraduate EFL major should acquire the technical knowledge of a literary critic, whereas to demand a degree of appreciation of major literary works is most certainly justifiable. In fact, this has been the practice in the EFL program of many Chinese universities and colleges. The practice manifests itself in two ways. First, most literature courses are taught in English, which has both positive and negative effects—positive in the sense that language learning is facilitated and the cultural aspect better communicated, negative because this limits the depth, if not the breadth, of the content of the courses. After all, you cannot expect the undergraduates to have native, or even near-native, competence in the target language. Nor can we demand that level of teachers at present. The second manifestation of the practice is that literature in the broad sense, not just belles-lettres, is included in the syllabuses.

Of course, given the human as well as material resources, the English level of the students, and the nature of institutions, there is a great deal of variation between one literature course and another, both in the scope of offerings and in syllabuses and methods. And teachers at different universities and colleges are given considerable latitude to design courses as they wish.

Teaching the literature course

Literature study takes the form of teaching followed by discussion. In the course I offer I leave reading to the students outside class hours. What I do in class is to put the authors and their works in a proper perspective and lead the students in discussion. I play the role of a director, which is more difficult than just straight lecturing, because Chinese students are by no means as "noisy" in class as their Western counterparts. They are industrious, good at rote learning, and capable of working on their own, but are often reluctant to raise and answer questions—sometimes you see heads being lowered as soon as you ask a question. To get out of this dilemma I organize the students into groups of two or three and ask the groups to give oral presentations for five to ten minutes on the authors and their works. In other words, I let them take over the class, acting like teachers. Their presentation, performance in class, and attendance account for 60 percent of their total score (the other 40 is gained by context and essay-type questions). This livens up the atmosphere and forces them into a seminar situation, which is more beneficial to them because every presentation requires that they go to different sources, acquaint themselves with the prescribed texts, organize their thoughts, and get ready to defend their arguments. In seminars, I insist on the use of English, no matter how insufficient and faulty it sometimes is. If you are to achieve anything in teaching, you have to challenge the students and "be cruel to be kind."

To arouse and sustain their interest, I make every effort to motivate the students by showing the relevance to their own lives of the ideas found in their reading. I try to create in them a desire to extract great meaning from what they read and guide them to discover major points by which they can judge the relative importance of the ideas they encounter. I also try to complement reading and discussion with the audial and the visual —showing films or playing videotapes adapted from the novels on the reading list. But very often there are things a teacher cannot do. So I make it clear at the outset of the course that I would feel quite contented if, by coming to my course, the students find that their appetite for literature is whetted.

In today's technological age, the teaching of English is not only of the greatest importance, but also presents one of the greatest difficulties. Let us join our efforts and meet the challenge.

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Tic-Tac-Pho

continued from page 9

would lose its turn. In addition to using the correct phonemic symbol (i.e., discriminating the vowel sound) and placing the symbol in the correct grid position, the students in this last modified activity must also correctly produce the phoneme sound. With a little thought, the teacher and students can improvise a variety of activities modifying Tic-Tac-Pho.

Conclusion

I have found teaching basic phonology using Tic-Tac-Pho to be a helpful tool in the EFL classroom. The teacher uses a phonemic alphabet, which is a more precise vehicle than the conventional English alphabet for instruction. He can describe the sounds as part of a system, each in relation to all the other members of the English vowel system. Once the student has an understanding of basic phonology, he can better hear, identify, and produce a sound besides being able to identify and correct his own errors. The student self-corrects by a process of analysis. Is his tongue in the right position? Are his lips rounded or spread? Are his cheek muscles tense? Is the sound diphthongized?

Erich Fromm has suggested one possible definition of man. He calls him *Homo ludus,* "man of play." Through games man learns. Tic-Tac-Pho is a game that enlivens a class and takes the dreariness out of learning theory. The students associate phonological theory with a stimulating game that tests and expands their competence and performance skills in a competitive and informal way.

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FORUM NEWS & IDEAS

BAHRAIN

Spinning the Tale: An Approach to the Testing of Reading Comprehension

WOLFGANG H. KAHLER
Gulf Polytechnic

Reading comprehension is standardly tested by a graded question-answer format before and/or after the reading. To occasionally break the tedium of this classic approach when testing extensive outside reading assignments, I have developed a way of testing reading comprehension through paraphrase.

Since our Arab students hail from a culture with a long oral tradition, they seem to have an aptitude for relating the minutiae of tales. Accordingly, I selected three student readers that proved to be of particular value for a story-telling approach to the testing of reading comprehension:

1. *The Young King and Other Stories*, by Oscar Wilde, an abridged 1200-word Longman Group Ltd. version.
2. *Stories by Shakespeare*, also an abridged 1200-word Longman version.
3. *Strange Tales from the Arabian Nights*, by Margery Green, a 2500-word-level Macmillan reader.

I employed the following technique in exploring these tales: I began each session by asking the students some indirect exploratory questions to establish the context of the setting of each tale. I then directed a student to begin spinning the tale. After I felt a natural cut-off point had been reached, I directed other students to continue sequencing the story, hoping to involve as much of the class as possible, until the tale was spun. My technique in eliciting continual student sequencing of the tale was to rely almost totally on the students for correcting grammatical or factual mistakes. For this reason, I taped the session and played it back for identification of errors, and, if warranted, did a bit of oral drilling with the structures that presented particular difficulties.

I have made the following observations about this technique:

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Wolfgang Kahler is a lecturer in the English Language Unit, Gulf Polytechnic, Bahrain. He taught previously in Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Chad. Mr. Kahler holds an M.S. degree in TESL from the State University of New York at Albany and an M.Ed. in urban teaching from Towson State University. He has published several articles and two textbooks on listening comprehension.

1. The students have a keen ear for discerning contextual and grammatical incongruities on the part of the speaker. Everyone wants the teacher to know that he knows!
2. Since the students are totally engaged, they find this approach particularly stimulating.
3. Since everyone is likely to be called upon to sequence the story, everyone completes the home assignment.
4. Students find it fascinating to hear their own voices in another language. ■

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Co-Producing Plays

PAUL DAVENPORT
Franziscusgymnasium, Lingen

I'd like to share a technique I've developed during the past several years while teaching English to German pupils in the ninth and tenth grades. I conceived the idea as an alternative teaching unit to give the pupils an opportunity to leave the well-worn paths of grammar units and readers for a while and try something new and creative. The technique, "co-producing plays," has met with a high level of pupil interest and involvement.

Creating the play

The five steps of the technique can be described as follows:

1. *Agreeing on the Genre.* Once the pupils have decided they would like to co-produce a play, the first matter to be decided is what kind of play it is to be. The teacher names the various types of plays (comedy, satire, parody, musical, adaptation of folk or fairy tales, etc.), providing brief explanations with examples where necessary. The pupils are encouraged to express their opinions about the types and to suggest other types. When the discussion is finished, the pupils vote for the genre of their choice.

2. *Brainstorming.* The pupils are asked to let their minds roam in search of ideas that fit the chosen genre. The teacher can ask questions and enhance the pupils' contributions, but he should not try to control this important phase, the goal of which is the generation of as many more or less pertinent ideas as possible. All of the ideas should be written down.

3. *Sifting and Connecting.* The goal of this phase is to identify the best ideas and to connect them, where possible, with one another with an eye to creating a story line. The teacher, with a light touch, guides the pupils in constructing a rough draft, a framework, in which all ensuing work will take place. The remaining gaps are bridged with additional ideas.

4. *Building Up the Acts.* This phase lends itself to group work. Each group of pupils is assigned one of the parts of the framework, preferably the one they would most like to work on. If the currents of group dynamics are allowed to flow freely, the filling out of the various parts will be accomplished in a burst of creative activity. The groups are encouraged to communicate with one another, so that the story line will not be marred by repetition or contradiction. When the groups have finished, each group reads its piece aloud and the other groups are asked to comment on and criticize its contribution. The groups should then try to integrate the best of the feedback into their act.

5. *Finishing Touches.* Now it is the teacher's turn to be creative. Having collected the results of the group activity, the teacher is faced with the task of transforming this more or less promising raw material into the finished product. At this point I can imagine that many nonnative-speaker teachers of English might throw up their hands in despair, feeling that only native speakers are up to a project of this kind. To them I would say, "Try it anyway"; the multiple benefits of this kind of learning are far more important than the effort required to produce a halfway idiomatic piece of (play) writing. (Besides, if one doesn't seize opportunities to work creatively with the English language such as present

themselves in co-producing a play, what is going to become of one's tenuous grip on the language?) In working with the pupils' rough draft it is important to remember that they have contributed ideas that they are proud of and can identify with; therefore, we should take care to preserve as many of these ideas as possible in the final product.

Presenting the play

As soon as the teacher completes a part of the play, it is mimeographed and distributed to the pupils, and new words and expressions are explained. When the whole play is complete and has been gone through, it is time to distribute the roles. A satisfactory way of doing this is to allow the pupils to nominate candidates, at least for the more important roles, and vote for the candidate of their choice. In my experience, their choice is usually a wise one.

The work up to this point, which takes anywhere from three to five weeks, is followed by the final phase: rehearsing the play. How much time a class needs for this will vary from class to class; in my experience 10 to 12 lessons are required to whip the production into shape for stage presentation. During this phase one can also give homework assignments in the form of summaries of each act, etc.

The question of whether the play can be presented will depend on the attitude of the school administration toward projects of this kind. I have been in the fortunate position of receiving administration support for our play projects. There are certain special times during a school year (like the last days before a vacation or school festival days) when a school play fits nicely into the general program. Aiming the preparation at that day adds a sense of urgency to the project.

Rationale for this technique

Linguistic Benefits. The educational benefits deriving from co-produced plays go far beyond the measure of how much English the pupils learn in the process, but let me begin from that limited point of view. The language learning involved can be seen as an "osmosis effect," stemming from an unusually extensive and intensive exposure to the language of the play. For weeks at a time, the pupils hear and speak the words and sentences of the play. These utterances, unlike the isolated sentences found in many grammar books, are situational and functional, so that their meaning is evident to the pupils. At the same time, typical structures and patterns of the language become increasingly familiar. In such an extensive selection of language a large variety of sentence structures is to be found, and each structure appears in its natural habitat, i.e., as the appropriate form for a given linguistic function.

One of the many learning areas within the "osmosis effect" is that of articulation, an aspect that doesn't always receive the attention it deserves. The contextual language of a play demands extraordinary effort in this area. Knowing that fellow pupils and teachers will be watching and listening, the pupils involved are willing to practice hard to get the pronunciation and intonation of their utterances right.

Paul Davenport has taught English and religion at the Franziscusgymnasium in Lingen for 10 years, and has taught also in Canada and the United States. He received a doctorate in theology from Nijmegen, the Netherlands, and has published several articles on theology. One of Mr. Davenport's special interests is the field of fairy tales.

Other Benefits. It goes without saying that teamwork is a valuable educational experience. Producing a play is a team effort from start to finish. The pupils have their roles to play—I make sure that there is a part for each pupil—and the roles mesh like the parts of a fine machine. A team spirit is also demanded in the work done behind the scenes (props, settings, music, etc.). Essential to the blossoming of team spirit is, of course, the teacher's willingness to delegate responsibility—for example, by encouraging the pupils to react to the rehearsed scenes with praise or criticism. Once the project gains momentum, the alert teacher will see and welcome the opportunity to play a less dominating role than usual.

Needless to say, the applause of an appreciative audience can do wonders for the self-esteem of the participants, both as individuals and as a class. As one of the "actors" put it: "That's the first time we've gotten so much praise from our teachers."

In my opinion, the high level of motivation generated in the carrying out of a co-produced play has something to do with the secret wish of every human being to be in the limelight. After all, there's some ham[1] in everyone. Taking advantage of this basic human motivation, the teacher can channel it into the learning of English. And, provided that the play goes over well, which in my experience has invariably been the case, a good measure of this high level of motivation will be carried over to succeeding English units as well as to other subjects.

It is often said, and rightly so, that education in the German school system, especially at the level of the *Gymnasium,* is one-sidedly verbal and theoretical, that the unvarying daily diet of the pupil is the written word. Texts, texts, and more texts! Plays are based on the *spoken word* and involve the *whole person,* not just his or her discursive intelligence. The whole spectrum of human feeling, otherwise badly neglected in the classroom, comes into play in the drama. The opportunity to express the depths of human feeling can be a cathartic experience not only for the actors and actresses involved but also for the audience.

Especially important for this age group (15–17-year-olds) is the expression of romantic feeling. As the plays are based on the pupils' own ideas, it is no surprise that the boy-girl relationship plays a key role in them. It is both painful and instructive to observe the often shy and awkward efforts, especially on the part of the boys, to act out scenes of this kind. One is struck by the fact that in spite of the so-called sexual revolution, traditional inhibitions are still very much in evidence and that boy-girl interaction of this kind, even though it is "only" play-acting, is a beneficial experience for all concerned.

EXCERPTS FROM CINDERELLA II

The following excerpt is taken from *Cinderella I and II,* a play done with a 10th-grade class. The idea of the play was to present the fairy tale Cinderella in two versions, the original version as the first part (Cinderella I) and a modern adaptation (Cinderella II) as the second part. The following are excerpts from the first act of the second version, Cinderella II.

Rose: Prince looks for his princess! Here, listen to this. The one and only internationally famous pop star Harry Prince is going to be at the Plastic Doll this evening.

Cathy: Wow, Harry Prince, my idol! What's he doing in our town? What does that mean: . . . looking for a princess? You must be joking.

Rose: No joke, sister dear. He's searching for a female partner for his next video clip.

Cathy: Wow! And how will he choose her? What do you have to do?

Rose: The ad says that all girls with singing and dancing talent 16 years old and older are qualified.

Cathy: Qualified . . . for what?

Rose: To take part in the talent contest, silly.

Cathy: Oh, wow! I knew it would pay off to take voice and dance lessons. Harry Prince, watch out, here I come. Listen to this, sister mine: (*sings up and down the scale*)

. . . . . .

(*Cindy comes in*)

Cindy: Hi. Have you heard about the contest?

1. EDITOR'S NOTE: As used here, *ham* means a liking to perform as an actor in a play.

Rose: Of course. Long before you. Mother is helping us get ready right now.

Cindy: Oh, mother, may I go, too?

Mother: To the Plastic Doll? How dare you ask! Have you forgotten our little agreement?

Cindy: No, mother, but I thought . . .

Mother: As long as you insist on walking around in such dreadful clothes and ruining your beautiful hair —painting it all the colors of the rainbow—you are not to be seen with your sisters and you will not receive one cent in pocket money, not one cent.

. . . . . .

Mother: Cinderella! Enough of your sharp tongue. Now you listen to me. Don't get any funny ideas about sneaking off to the Plastic Doll after we've gone. If we see you there you'll never set foot in this house again, understood?

Cindy: Yes, mother.

Mother: We'll be returning at midnight and if I don't find you in your bed asleep you'll be in deep trouble. Now wish your sisters and me a pleasant evening.

Cindy: Have a pleasant evening.

. . . . . .

(*Cinderella alone, sad, doodling around on her home computer*)

Cindy: Oh, what a cruel family. If my mother weren't so mean, I could take part in the contest. I'd win the Prince's heart, I know I would. Too bad there's no such thing as fairy godmothers any more. I could use one now badly.

Computer: Cinderella!
C i n d e r e l l a !
C I N D E R E L L A !

Cindy: Who is it?

Computer: It's me, the spirit of your home computer. I heard you crying and have come to help you. Print up a program quickly—anything you wish—but hurry, I can't stand tears.

Cindy: Oh, wow! A computer with a heart! OK . . . OK . . . a program . . . I'll give you a program . . . (*prints a program, feeds it into the computer*)

(*almost immediately doorbell rings; Cindy goes to door*)

Escort: Cindy Smith? I'm from Rent-an-Escort. I've been asked to escort you to the Harry Prince Contest at the Plastic Doll. Here. I was given this package for you.

Cindy: Wow! New duds and . . . ohhh . . . new sneaks. Just my size . . . 48s.

Escort: You must hurry. The contest will soon begin. My Harley Davidson is outside.

Cindy: No problem, doll boy. I'll be ready in a minute.

. . . . . .

As the excerpts make clear, the basic ideas for co-produced plays come from the pupils themselves and reflect their particular stage of development. For that very reason, because of their grass-roots origins, the plays possess a liveliness, freshness, and charm that cannot be denied. Furthermore, co-produced plays are an apt way to further the kind of message-oriented communication called for by modern linguistics. My advice to teachers of English as a foreign tongue teaching at lower and middle levels (sixth to tenth grades): Try your hand at a co-produced play. Take the plunge! The water's fine. ■

INDIA

Teaching Grammar Communicatively

S. P. SYLVESTER
M. S. University, Baroda

This article presents an experiment in teaching English grammar communicatively to first-year college students in Gujarat, India. Most of the students in a first-year degree class in a college or university in Gujarat are from Gujarati-medium schools. These students start learning English in the sixth or eighth class and have had five to seven years of English at school. When teaching English grammar to such students at the first-year degree level, the teacher should keep this fact in mind, and should be aware of the number of times a particular grammar item may already have been dealt with.

English grammar at school and college

The English syllabus of the Secondary School Certificate Examination deals with almost all areas of English grammar. Similarly, the syllabus of the Higher Secondary Certificate Examination gives importance to a good number of grammar items taught in the secondary school. Therefore there would seem no need to teach the first-year degree students any grammar. Since the university syllabus lists most of the items that the students have learned at school, a teacher is tempted to repeat them, which can have an adverse effect on the learners.

One important thing that the college teacher of English tends to forget is that the learners know the *usage* and not the *use* of English. In Gujarati-medium schools, the teacher of English generally resorts to the grammar-translation method. He writes or indicates the rules of grammar and churns out a few discrete-item exercises. As the learners are adept in the *usage* of English, they do these exercises without any mistakes. Paragraphs, essays, and letters they learn by rote. Thus, an opportunity for the students to *use* English for their communicative needs is rare. The students are able to produce grammatically correct sentences that may not be appropriate or meaningful in real-life situations. Hence a college teacher of English has a lot of scope for developing the students' communicative skills. Teaching grammar in college/university can be taken up at a remedial level and the students can be given a chance to use English appropriately in meaningful contexts.

A remedial technique for verb tenses

An area that confuses first-year students is tenses. As they are taught tenses in isolation, without any regard to the lesson or other subjects, they lack confidence when they have to write a letter or paragraph on their own. This is not only because of mother-tongue interference, but because of the lack of opportunity to use English appropriately in continuous speech and writing.

The following is an attempt to teach the use of the simple past tense communicatively. This presupposes the learners' knowledge of the simple present tense. As it is a remedial technique, the entire business of teaching the simple past tense should not exceed a single period of 45 minutes.

The experimental lesson has nine sections (five minutes for each section).

Section 1. Greeting, roll call, and motivating the students to learn English.

Section 2. The teacher asks certain simple questions related to the learners' areas of interest. The questions are aimed at their knowledge of the simple present tense:

Teacher: (to student A) Where do you come from?
A: (answers)
Teacher: (to student B) Where does A come from?
B: (answers)
(If A and B are from the same place, C could be asked.)
Teacher: (to student C) Where do A and B come from?
C: (answers)

If the students answer correctly (i.e., if they are able to distinguish third-person singular in the simple present tense—a problem area—from other persons), the learners' knowledge of the simple present tense can be taken for granted.

Section 3. The students are asked to read silently part of a lesson or extract from their reader or textbook and are asked to mark the

simple present tense. If an appropriate lesson in the reader or textbook is not available, the teacher could use a cyclostyled sheet (to be distributed among the students). The teacher can go around the class to see whether students are doing the task correctly.

Section 4. Now it is time to test the students' ability to distinguish the simple present tense from the simple past tense.

Mark "A" for past events, and "B" for present events in the following sentences:

1. They sing beautifully.
2. She did not post the letter.
3. Did you see yesterday's *Times of India?*
4. Please do not come late.
5. We went together yesterday to see that film at Regal.

Section 5. Students are asked to mark the verbs in the simple past in the same passage in which they marked the simple present tense. The teacher can examine the responses by looking at the passage or extract when the students are marking them.

Section 6. The teacher asks certain questions of the students to make sure of their ability to change a present-tense form into a past-tense form.

Teacher: (to student A) When did you pass your Higher Secondary Examination?
A: (answers)
Teacher: (to student B) When did A pass his Higher Secondary Examination?
B: (answers)
Teacher: (to student C) When did you receive your marksheet?
C: (answers)
Teacher: (to student D) When did C receive his marksheet?
D: (answers)

The students can be encouraged to ask similar questions to others in the next row or bench.

Section 7. (Testing the simple past tense in situational context)

"Raju is unlucky. Whenever he asks his friends to do something, he finds out that they have already done it."

Complete the answers with the past-tense form of the underlined verb.

1. Raju: Do you want to go with me to see the film at Metro?
   Rahul: Sorry, I _____ to see the film last night.
2. Raju: Do you want to see "Spiderman" tonight?
   Rahul: I _____ "Spiderman" last week.
3. Raju: Do you want to buy kites in the city?
   Rahul: I _____ them yesterday.

Section 8. Students are asked to write a paragraph not exceeding five sentences about their experience in the examination hall during their Higher Secondary Certificate Examination.

Section 9. Rewrite the following paragraph in the simple past tense.

I go for a walk in the morning. Very often my friend Mohan accompanies me if he gets up early. We talk about many things. When we reach the bus stand, we order a cup of tea. We share the tea. On our way back we see many people on the road.

Homework: The students are asked to rewrite a particular lesson in their own words using the simple past tense. (A lesson in the simple present tense is selected.)

In the next class, the teacher could give remedial work to correct the students' errors in the use of the simple past tense. This will enable the students to discover for themselves the *use* of the rules they have already learned and to employ them for communicative purposes accurately and appropriately.

Further suggestions

It would be ideal to take passages from the students' areas of specialization. This is difficult, however, because the general English class of the first-year degree is likely to consist of students specializing in different areas. In a syllabus intended to develop communicative skills in the learners, it is advisable to have students grouped according to their area of specialization.

Although this experiment is an attempt to teach the simple past tense of English in a communicative way, it should not be difficult to teach other grammar items in a similar way.

Silvayya P. Sylvester is a lecturer in English at M.S. University, Baroda. He holds a bachelor of philosophy degree from Pontifical Alheaneum, Poona, M.A. degrees in English and linguistics from M.S. University, and a D.T.E. in ELT from Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad. He is presently researching the communicative teaching of English.

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JAPAN

The Kamishibai

MICHAEL REDFIELD
Nanzan Women's College

Teaching English as a foreign language through the use of drama techniques has become very popular over the past decade. A number of journal articles and teacher reference books dealing with the subject have appeared, drama-teaching presentations and workshops are popular at conferences, and drama-based textbooks for students of EFL are in all the bookstores. Just because drama seems "in" these days, however, does not mean that it is easy to do, and the teacher with no drama background or experience cannot be faulted for hesitating before committing all the time and energy necessary for a major classroom production. The purpose of this article is to introduce a kind of traditional Japanese play, the Kamishibai,[1] that has most of the advantages that go along with the use of drama in the EFL classroom, but is also a lot easier to put on than a full-scale Western play.

The Kamishibai has a long and honored history in the world of Japanese folk theater and is still popular with children today. It is a kind of paper drama, and as such is perhaps a precursor to the Sunday funny papers or to today's comic books. In the Kamishibai the scenes are drawn on sheets of paper about the size of a modern newspaper, which the actor holds in front of him for all to see, while orally describing the situation and/or performing the lines of a dialogue.

It is very easy to modify the Kamishibai for ESL classroom use. Since there are not usually many parts to a Kamishibai, it is best to divide the class into groups of about four and have each group make its own play. The first thing each group has to do is come up with a story. Some groups adapt well-known folk

1. The idea behind using the Kamishibai in the EFL classroom comes from Father Paul LaForge at Nanzan University. The author hereby acknowledges his debt to Father LaForge for the use of many of his ideas.

tales for their Kamishibai, others like to develop themes from movies or popular songs, while others prefer to make up their own original stories.

Once the general theme is decided on, each production team should start to outline the scenes that will go into the Kamishibai. For classroom purposes 10 scenes, including title and ending scenes, are about right. Work on the written text can then begin. Two or three lines per scene are enough for lower-level students, while more advanced students might do up to four or five lines. Each group writes its own story, relying on the teacher only for vocabulary and help with accuracy.

When the text is written, the groups can begin memorizing their parts and filling in the scenes. Drawing materials and paint can sometimes be borrowed from the art class, or even more ideally, help can be solicited from the art teacher and, where possible, the scenes can be painted in art class. It is at this stage that music can be brought in. Normally, students choose to bring in background music from their own collections, but some groups have been known to make the music and tape it themselves.

A final word on the technical side of the Kamishibai: Although in Japan a single actor plays all the roles, for ESL purposes it is better to have each student have at least one speaking part. And in drawing the scenes it is best not to include too many distracting details. The main characters and one or two things characteristic of each scene are enough.

All theater is meant to be seen by a public, and the Kamishibai is no exception. Ideally, each group's play should be presented not only to the class, but to other classes as well. The English level of the student audiences is of no import. If the plays have been taken from folk tales or well-known movies, the audience already knows the general outline of the story, and even when they do not, the painted scenes are almost always clear enough to let everyone at least get the gist of the story.

A lot of work does go into the production of a successful Kamishibai, between 20 and 30 hours' worth of class time perhaps, but it is well worth it. Students work independently in groups, and take responsibility for their own plays. They have to choose them, write them, practice them, and perform them, all on their own. Admittedly, not much English is used when painting the scenes or choosing the music, even if an "English only" rule is enforced, but by producing the whole play by themselves, the students seem to involve a part of them rarely touched in most cerebral EFL classrooms. The whole person is somehow involved, and that seems to make the experience, and the learning, more rewarding.

So, if you are interested in English through drama but worried about your and your students' ability to put on a real play in English, why don't you give the Kamishibai a try? If you find that it works for you and your students, the next time you might be able to take full advantage of all those teacher's manuals, workshops, and drama texts. ■

Michael Redfield teaches at Nanzan Women's College in Nagoya. He graduated from the University of Montana, has studied foreign languages in Germany, Spain, and France, and holds an M.A. in foreign-language education from Stanford University. Mr. Redfield has taught and served as director of courses at language centers throughout the world. He has contributed articles to many language journals and given numerous workshops and presentations.

MALAWI

Teaching Grammar at the Level of Discourse

MOIRA CHIMOMBO
University of Malawi

I have never been happy with the view that grammar and structure can be taught separately and in isolation from the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and I have become increasingly dissatisfied with this view over the past 16 years of teaching in West and South Central Africa, first at secondary-school level (in Cameroon and Malawi) and then as a teacher educator (in Malawi). Yet it seems that many teachers of English on the continent still cling to the belief that knowing about the language is more important than knowing the language. In order to counter this belief in my own student teachers, I have had them observe me teaching secondary-school composition lessons during which I have attempted to integrate the teaching of grammar and structure with the teaching of written discourse. In other words, my aim has been to teach not grammatical sentences, which I believe are relatively easy to teach, but grammatical discourse, which researchers have only recently begun to understand how to teach. I feel it is particularly important to teach discourse- rather than sentence-level grammar at the secondary level, because in many countries in Anglophone Africa pupils have already been taught sentence-level grammar of English from the early years in primary school, so they need a somewhat different approach at the new level to encourage them to continue learning.

In this article, I hope to show how it is possible to get Form I (Grade 9) pupils writing "poems" to practice a grammar point, and then to work beyond the first-draft "poems" to expanded sentences and organized discourse. To do this, I shall give examples of each stage of a series of 80-minute composition lessons to illustrate how my own pupils progressed towards coherent paragraphs, in an approach in some ways comparable with sentence combining.

"Poem" writing can be used to work on a number of grammar topics, including the basic requirements of the complete simple sentence (Noun/Pronoun as Subject + Verb as Predicate); work on different tenses and subject-verb agreement in the third-person singular/plural; expansion of the noun phrase with adjectives and of the verb phrase with adverbs; and the use of conjunctions to combine simple into compound or complex sentences.

The first step is to ask each pupil to write down on five lines of his/her exercise book five different nouns (objects to be described), all of which may collocate in a particular context, such as the market, which is one of the contexts I suggested to my pupils. Each pupil then has to write after the chosen noun a verb corresponding to a sound which that object might make. In order to make sure the pupils understand the task, it is a good idea to compose a few lines together on the chalkboard first, for example:

Vegetable sellers	shout.
Water	splashes.
Buckets	clang.

Notice from this example that, as is true of almost any grammar topic, the teacher and class may be led into consideration of another topic, in this case both subject-verb agreement in the present simple tense and countable and uncountable nouns. But this should present no problem because, in the context in which I have used this approach, the vast majority of grammar topics have already been studied at primary school, so most lessons are likely to be review. Furthermore, it is in the nature of language to have to deal with more than one aspect at a time. It is the attempt to isolate one grammar topic from another that is unnatural.

Already at this stage, the pupils are required to think about constraints on discourse, because they have to confine their sentences to one topic. If they choose to write five lines on the market, they must not introduce a line about home or the cafeteria. Before they go on to the next stage, they should each evaluate their friends' "poems" to check that each of the five lines is on the same topic.

The pupils may then be asked to change their sentences from the present simple to either the present continuous or the simple past tense. This exercise gives the teacher an opportunity to work both on the mechanical

Moira P. F. Chimombo is head of the English Language Unit at Chancellor College, University of Malawi, where she has been a lecturer in English language since 1980. She teaches courses in the theory and practice of language teaching, discourse analysis, and psycholinguistics. Dr. Chimombo taught English in secondary schools in Cameroon and Malawi before going to New York in 1976 to study for M.A. and Ed.D. degrees in TESOL at Teachers College, Columbia University.

aspects of tense forms and on the differences in meaning resulting from tense changes. It also allows pupils to revise and expand their "poems" beyond the original five lines suggested at the beginning. I have had pupils who have written "poems" of up to 20 lines at this stage.

Having worked on the basic requirements of the simple sentence, the teacher can now move towards getting pupils to expand their sentences, first by working on the noun phrase while still keeping the structure of the simple sentence. For example, introducing adjectives before the noun enables the class to work on choice of vocabulary and to see the danger of using adjectives that in some sense contradict the meaning of the verb. Pupils should work on the "poems" they have already written, and volunteers may be asked to write their "poems" on the chalkboard. Together, the class can then look at possible adjectives to describe the nouns. Here is an example of a line from one pupil's "poem" in which the adjective did not harmonize with the verb:

The *good* girl *screamed*.

The class should discuss the implications of the adjectives chosen and their meaning relationship with the verbs. In this case, the pupil who had written the above line chose to change the adjective to *young*, although she could have chosen to change the verb rather than the adjective.

After the discussion of the "poems" on the chalkboard, the pupils then work on their own "poems," adding two or three adjectives in front of the noun. Of course, this requires knowledge of the semantic basis of the order of adjectives before the noun (Halliday and Hasan 1976), which the pupils are unlikely to have learned in primary school, so will have to be taught: opinion, size, age, shape, color, place of origin, "made of," "used for," NOUN. After adding adjectives to their "poems," pupils may be asked to evaluate the correctness and effectiveness of one of their classmates' "poems," again written on the chalkboard. Here are two lines taken from the "poem" of one pupil, whose full version appears, corrected, in the next paragraph:

size opinion age
A small beautiful young girl laughed.

color age
A white old cock crowed.

The next step is to check the order of the lines within the "poem"; in other words, to consider the organization of the ideas. The "poem" already on the chalkboard may be used for this discussion. Here is one complete "poem" my class discussed, the one mentioned above:

AT HOME

A big black dog barked.	1
A wrinkled old man cried.	2
A tall young man shouted.	3
A beautiful small young girl laughed.	4
A black hen clucked.	5
An old white cock crowed.	6
A smooth new chain clinked.	7
An old metal cup crashed to the ground.	8

In this particular "poem," while lines 2–4 are juxtaposed acceptably, in view of the common theme of "people," and lines 5–6 likewise have in common "fowl," lines 1,7, and 8 are not justifiably connected with the following and immediately preceding lines. Discussion of the logical connections between ideas expressed in the different lines of the "poem" will help the pupils towards better organizing the sequence of ideas in discourse. My class agreed on the following reordering of lines after we had discussed the relationships between the ideas:

1, 7, 5, 6, 2, 3, 4, 8

The final stage in this sequence is to work on making the "poems" more interesting by joining sentences with conjunctions. For example, part of the above "poem" turned out as follows:

A black hen clucked
and an old white cock crowed
when the big black dog
whose smooth new chain clinked
barked.

I have found that pupils especially enjoy experimenting with possible combinations because they already know most conjunctions but need more practice in choosing the most appropriate ones for the meanings they wish to express. They may also be encouraged to expand their "poems" by adding adverbs if they so wish. By now their work more closely resembles real poems, and they are usually pleased with their efforts.

I have illustrated in detail just one technique for integrating grammar topics into composition lessons, a technique that may be adapted to different topics. I have found that my pupils were particularly responsive to this technique for a number of possible reasons. First, although it is similar to other techniques that require a gradual build-up of sentences, the pupils are free to choose their own topic, and therefore invest more time and interest in developing it. Second, pupils tend to write more grammatically when they have been given a say in what they are to write about. Also, when they choose their own topic, they are likely to write more than is demanded by the teacher. Third, while most grammar topics are practiced by giving pupils exercises on isolated sentences, each of which has no supporting context, in using this technique pupils provide their own context for the study of the grammar topic. This context increases the likelihood of the pupils mastering the grammar focus because they understand what they have written. Finally, this technique brings grammar to life. Grammar should not be seen as something boring, divorced from language use, but as a tool for effective communication, in this case in writing. Many of my student teachers had expressed reservations about teaching grammar because they mistakenly believed it had to be isolated from the more interesting skills-teaching. I hope I have shown readers, as I have shown my student teachers, that grammar can be taught just as effectively, if not more so, by integrating it into the teaching of composition.

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OMAN

Using Job-Related Pictures to Stimulate Oral Production

NEIL MCBEATH
Sultan's Armed Forces School, Muscat

There is nothing new in the idea of using pictures in teaching, and in British EFL it has become an accepted technique to use a picture whenever possible to stimulate class interest. At the most basic level this is done by holding up a picture and saying "This is Sue. Today we're going to look at how Sue . . . ," etc., involving the class with Sue and whatever activity she is engaged in. Indeed, this approach has become so familiar that exponents of the use of pictures tend to sound almost defensive about their ideas (Newton 1981), although a cursory glance around many EFL classrooms in developing countries would demonstrate that all too many teachers still fail to appreciate the potential of this approach.

This is unfortunate, for McAlpin (1980) has published a very detailed book showing new teachers how to build up a picture file, and Cook and Parulis (1981) have demonstrated that the picture file is a useful aid at all levels

of teaching and that the simplicity of the material does not preclude its use for advanced teaching purposes, as in their ESP work at Kuwait University. Nagy (1984, 1985) has reinforced this point with his use of simple sketches in teaching English in Saudi Arabia.

Our ESP situation

A similar use of pictures has been made at the English Language School of the Sultan of Oman's Air Force. The students at this school are officers and NCOs from all three branches of the Omani Armed Forces, and their teaching is arranged at three levels, each level lasting for approximately 12 weeks. At Standard III students are accepted as total beginners, and are taught to read and write, given basic vocabulary and communicative concepts, and they are taught to handle the present tense. At Standard II the past and future are introduced, together with longer reading passages, comprehension exercises, and more demanding communicative tasks; and in Standard I the past continuous, present perfect, and conditionals are used.

Unfortunately, continuity between the standards can be broken when students are withdrawn for military duties essential to their parent units, and so it is not unknown for students to arrive at a Standard II course several years after completing Standard III, and without any interim study.

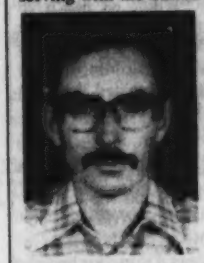
Because of this, and also because some of the older students may have had no formal education at all (Omani education only began with the accession of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said in 1970), rapid and vivid reinforcement and review are necessary at all levels. From the moment they enter the class, the students have to be encouraged to draw all their learning resources together and to activate as much of their passive knowledge as possible. To this end pictures are invaluable, and the English Language School has gradually developed a file that leads the students from more general vocabulary to their specific needs, which is a low-level military ESP.

How we use pictures

One method of using these pictures is to split the class into smaller groups of three or four, and then give each group an A4-sized picture of a fairly neutral subject, like the interior of a room. Ernestová (1981) suggests that small pictures glued onto small cards can also be used for this purpose, but we have found that the A4 size is more effective, and smaller pictures are used for individual work only.

As a group, the students discuss the picture and write a short paragraph about it, using formulas like *I can see . . . , There is/There are . . . ,* and *I think. . . .* As Baddock (1979) suggests, vocabulary can be both reviewed and developed by describing pictures, and use of prepositions and comparative adjectives can also be reinforced. The pictures can also be exchanged by the different groups, and at the end of the lesson one student will read aloud what his group has produced, while the other groups are free to supplement the information.

Neil McBeath is a contracted education officer serving with the Sultan of Oman's Air Force as head of English at the Sultan's Armed Forces School. Previously he taught at the English Language School of the Sultan's Armed Forces. Mr. McBeath has taught EFL in private schools and a technical college in England, and also at Riyadh University in Saudi Arabia. He regularly writes articles and has held examinerships for a number of boards.



Once the students have familiarized themselves with this approach, pictures of exterior views can be introduced to take them beyond their own cultural experience—or pictures of people, reviewing family relationships and occupations. Once this has been accomplished, the students are introduced to pictures concerned primarily with military situations, and in this area we are fortunate in having an excellent source of illustrations in the form of a monthly illustrated magazine that is issued free to all serving members of the armed forces. This magazine contains news of both general and particular interest to the recipients. The Royal Guard Brigade and the Royal Oman Police publish similar magazines, and in all cases their illustrations are excellent, coming in a variety of sizes, which makes them suitable for presentation either as individual A4 pictures or as smaller pictures mounted in sequence. The most important thing about these illustrations is that they are directly relevant to the students' learning needs, and in many cases they have an immediacy that is lacking in illustrations taken from European magazines. For example, it is not unusual for personnel to see photographs of themselves being used for stimulus, and with material this closely related to their interests it is easy to move the students into the area of ESP, where their professional commitment takes precedence over the fact that they are temporarily in the role of language students. This activates what Balet (1984) refers to as "the will to learn," where the students are actively concerned with communicating and are, in Steinmann's (1981) words, "communicating real information about themselves or their subject field . . . not . . . merely doing language exercises." In other words, the English-language element has become almost a secondary factor, a means to an end rather than the end itself.

A specific example

One example here will suffice. With one class I handed out a number of military-oriented pictures, making sure that the job-specific pictures did *not* go to those men who were involved in that particular specialist trade. The students then discussed the pictures and wrote a few sentences about each while I went round the groups to answer questions and correct phraseology.

Once this work was completed, an individual from each group was asked to read aloud what had been produced, and then a member from the relevant trade was asked if he would like to contribute any additional information. At this point the change was remarkable. A picture of an artillery piece, described as a "big gun" by a group from Signal Regiment, was more correctly identified as a "light 105mm field gun" by a sergeant from the Artillery, and "some men" became "the section." "How many men to a section?" "Five!" And subsequent questions came spontaneously from the class *in English* and were answered *in English,* despite the fact that this information could have been elicited just as effectively in Arabic.

This class, therefore, produced a situation directly parallel to that described by Steinmann in Hamburg: "For many students this was the first time in a foreign-language class that they had concentrated on *what* they said, rather than how they said it." But the significant difference between the students is that while Steinmann was teaching psychology students at university level, the servicemen whom I have described were in their fourth month of language learning.

Some important implications

That this response and motivation can be generated so early has enormous implications. If this experience reflects a universal situation, then it follows that the academic level of the student is less important than the student's familiarity and involvement with the material presented; thus oral work in ESP can be presented effectively at *any* level. Student involvement and concern are therefore of paramount importance, and while many EFL teachers at least pay lip service to the concept of treating adult classes as if they were composed of intelligent adults, all too often we fail to discover the areas that are of most personal concern to our students. This is not a plea for the "forced interaction . . . baring of one's soul" (Holden 1984) found in psychodrama, for in ESP, by definition, areas of personal concern are obvious, and the more we concern ourselves with them, the stronger becomes the students' desire to communicate. It is this desire to communicate that gives the impetus to language learning; and a job-specific illustration can act as the trigger for an explosion of talk.

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POLAND

Ideas for Class Discussion: De Bono's "Stepping Stones"

URSZULA FRYSZTACKA-SZKRÓBKA

I Liceum Ogólnokształcące im. Powstańców Śląskich, Rybnik

In nearly 20 years of teaching English in secondary school, I have used various approaches, and in every case I have endeavored to motivate my pupils, to develop in them a thirst for knowledge. That is why I try to use various strategies to instill in the pupils a love of the subject and to make myself eventually redundant as the pupils seek knowledge for themselves and go on perfecting their English.

It is along these lines that I have attempted to adapt to my teaching some aspects of the work of Edward De Bono, the English psychologist who founded (in 1969) and is currently directing the Cognitive Research Trust in Cambridge, as well as the Centre for the Study of Thinking. According to De Bono, one of the basic goals of thinking is to produce creative outcomes. To exercise this skill, the teacher of thinking is instructed to use "stepping stones," i.e., stimuli, to develop new ideas. "A stepping stone can be set up deliberately by saying anything unlikely or outrageous. The simplest way is to reverse the situation"[1] as in the following examples:

1. Cars should control traffic lights.
2. Chairs should always collapse when you sit on them.
3. Chairs should be placed on the ceiling.
4. Chairs should follow you around the room.
5. Chairs should stick pins in you when you sit on them.[2]

De Bono contends that from such outrageous suggestions good creative thinking can emerge. I have found that although De Bono's theory may not appear very relevant to teaching English as a foreign language, some of his suggestions can be used with advanced learners during the non-obligatory lessons designed for them by the school. This is how one such lesson, inspired by De Bono's theory, was conducted in I Liceum Ogólnokształcące im. Powstańców Śląskich in the Polish city of Rybnik. The "stepping stone" in this case was the following: "What if every human hair carried nerve endings throughout its length?" The lesson took place at the end of the fourth year of English (19-year-olds) and followed a series of lessons on conditionals that was prescribed by the curriculum.

Here are some ideas put forward by the pupils:

1. Fashions in hair coverings would flourish.
2. Barbers would cease to exist.
3. A haircut would be similar to a small amputation.
4. Shaving would be a torture.
5. Only sadists would qualify as hairdressers.
6. People wouldn't wash their hair.
7. Touching each other would be painful.
8. Unprotected hair would cause pain in windy weather.
9. Everyone would have long hair, and any haircutting that was required would have to be done by surgeons.
10. We would adopt hair styles at will, thus saving money.

In another such lesson with the same class, the following "stepping stone" suggested by De Bono was used: "What if cars had no reverse gear?"[3] Some of the ideas proposed by the pupils were similar to those of De Bono's pupils, namely:

1. You could only move forward at varying speeds.
2. You would need to plan your journey very carefully (using maps, etc.), so as to avoid being stuck in a blind alley.

Later on during the lesson the pupils turned to philosophical speculations which, though scorned by De Bono, stimulated a vigorous discussion, mostly in English. The pupils argued with such passion that they sometimes tended to lapse into Polish. At the end of the discussion one of the pupils formulated his views in the following way: "Life is like a car without a reverse gear, because you can't go back in time and unmake decisions."

The teacher then asked: What would the effect be if you could travel back in time? It would not necessarily give you any advantage because you would not carry with you the wisdom and experience you have gained. Under these circumstances would anyone want to revert to his previous self? Would, in fact, a reverse gear be of any use in life?

This was a problem to be considered at home. At the next lesson the pupils came prepared with their views on the subject. In general they did not approve of time travel as an idea. They thought that any decisions they or their parents had made would be tested only in the remote future. The final conclusion was rather conservative: Nature is perfect. Everything depends mainly on the here and now. So let's make the most of circumstances as they have been given to us. Let's learn a lot so as to be wiser in the future and avoid making the wrong decisions.

It is problematic whether the discussion led to the emergence of any "creative" ideas. The important achievement of these lessons was that the pupils were boiling over with all the things they wanted to say to such an extent that they used English vigorously, profusely, and at times even correctly! The two lessons mentioned above held the pupils' interest and were great fun both for those who took an active part in them and for those who reacted only by gestures and grunts to their friends' ideas. One might even say that such lessons stimulate the pupils' motivation to learn good English so as to play a leading part in such debates. The lessons may be considered successful in the fields of both thinking and language mainly because of the outrageous "stepping stones."

The open-ended questions by means of which De Bono makes you think undogmatically about "crazy" problems and unorthodox solutions can be of use to the teacher of English as a foreign language because they act as stimulants to speech and communication, to the articulation of unusual and exciting thoughts. The topics should not be given beforehand, especially to pupils with some de-

Urszula Frysztacka-Szkróbka has been a teacher of English in a secondary school for nearly 20 years. She received an M.A. from the University of Lublin, and in 1985 obtained the third degree of competence, the highest in Poland, in teaching EFL. Ms. Frysztacka-Szkróbka writes that she endeavors to motivate her pupils and develop in them a thirst for knowledge and a love of the subject.

1. Edward De Bono, *CORT Thinking IV* (London: Pergamon Press, 1981, p. 24).

2. Ibid., p. 48.

3. Edward De Bono, *Beyond Yes and No* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972, p. 22).

gree of fluency in the language, because they might then suffer the fate of ordinary homework, where the pupil seeks anxiously the "one-and-only" "correct" answer, i.e., the one that he thinks would most please his teacher. In such a case there would be hardly any debate during the lessons. The ultimate purpose of such debates is to help pupils achieve greater fluency in spoken English, to make them able to express in English abstract and complex ideas by discussing "outrageous" problems in a novel way. Such debates may be of benefit even to the teacher, demanding, as they do, special preparation, foresight, subtlety, and good "rapport" with the class. The teacher's role is to channel his pupils' shifting interest and usually short attention span towards unexplored areas, to involve in the discussion the silent majority, and to accustom them to thinking about the consequences of new ideas.

De Bono's ideas—as is well known—have not been received with unmitigated enthusiasm. However, his technique for making youngsters interested in what is said—or rather suggested—"ex cathedra" is original, undogmatic, and surprisingly easy to use. It can help the innovative teacher make English lessons not only less boring but even attractive. ■

More Effective Grammar Practice

MAŁGORZATA STAPIŃSKA and
JOLANTA ŚNIECHOWSKA
Jagiellonian University, Kraków

From the moment we started teaching English as a foreign language we have been concerned with working out an effective method of practicing grammar that would ensure that, having completed the course, a learner will be able to produce grammatically correct English sentences in a conversation. What spurred us was the fact that people often complained to us that they knew all the grammar rules by heart and had hardly any trouble doing exercises, but when it came to speaking they were unable to put the theory they knew so well into practice. We notice the same thing ourselves.

We would like to present here some innovations we have introduced that we think have increased the effectiveness of our efforts and have aroused learners' interest and motivation. We feel obliged to state here that, to a certain extent, we were inspired by the British Council language instructors during a one-week course for university teachers of English organized by the British Council and the Jagiellonian University.

We assume that the learner is already acquainted with a given grammar point and that now it is time to practice the structure in the best possible way, making sure that it is internalized by the learner so that he will be able to use it automatically without having to brood over its form and usage.

Repetition: Jazz Chants and songs

The first (and obvious) thing to do is to have the learner repeat some examples. Relieving monotony at this stage seemed difficult until we came across *Jazz Chants* (Caroline Graham, Oxford University Press, 1978). That was really a discovery! From the moment we introduced them, the repetition of the same structure over and over ceased to be tedious and mechanical. It became fun. Jazz Chants, as their author calls them, are short stories or, more often, poems, or sometimes songs, illustrating a particular grammatical structure, e.g., the imperative in "Easy Solutions":

Gee, I'm hungry!	Have a sandwich.
Gee, I'm angry!	Calm down!
Gee, I'm sleepy!	Take a nap!
Gee, it's chilly in here!	Put on a sweater.
Gee, it's hot in here!	Open a window.
I've got the hiccups!	Drink some water.
My nose itches.	Scratch it.
My feet hurt.	Sit down for awhile.
My shoes are tight.	Take them off.
I have a toothache.	Go to the dentist.
I have a headache.	Take some aspirin.
I'm lonely!	Call up a friend.
I'm bored!	Go to a movie.

From *Jazz Chants* by Carolyn Graham. Copyright © 1978 by Oxford University Press, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

or the present perfect tense in "The Beaches of Mexico":

Have you ever seen the beaches of Mexico?
Have you ever walked the streets of San Juan?
Have you ever been to Haiti?
Have you ever been to Spain?
Have you ever walked barefoot in a heavy rain?
Have you ever been in trouble?
Have you ever been in pain?
Have you ever been in love?
Would you do it all again?

Well, I've never seen the beaches of Mexico.
I've never walked the streets of San Juan.
I've never been to Haiti.
I've never been to Spain.
I've never walked barefoot in a heavy rain.
But I've sure been in trouble,
I've sure been in pain,
I've sure been in love,
I'd do it all again.

From *Jazz Chants* by Carolyn Graham. Copyright © 1978 by Oxford University Press, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

The important thing about them is that they are not spoken but chanted—sung with special intonation, rhythm, or melody, which makes it possible to practice all these things at the same time. Moreover, they often contain useful colloquial words or expressions. We have also noticed that the form of Jazz Chants enables students to remember them easily. Thus, assimilating a new structure becomes a painless and pleasant process of which the learner is often unaware.

As we have seen, Jazz Chants can change the first stage of practicing grammar into an interesting and enjoyable activity. Of course, if you want to use them it is best to have the original recording. On the other hand, if it is impossible to obtain it, you can use songs instead. It is not difficult to find a song in which a particular structure is repeated, e.g.:

has got—"He's got the whole world in his hands"
future tense—"We shall overcome"
past tense—"The animals went in two by two"
conditional sentences I—"When I'm sixty-four"
conditional sentences II—"If I had a hammer"

Realistic use of the forms

Now, when a learner has mastered the form, the next, and very important, step is to have him use this form consciously and naturally in appropriate contexts. We have given up using exercises from course books almost entirely at this stage because they are usually artificial and uninteresting. Done mechanically by learners, they hardly ever promote real communication.

Instead, we describe real-life, or sometimes abstract, situations in which a given grammatical structure is likely to be used and ask the learners to roleplay those situations. Or we give them cue sentences to which they must respond spontaneously and naturally, as in the following examples.

Present Perfect Continuous Tense

T: Your eyes are red.
S: Yes, I've been crying.
T: She looks tired, doesn't she?
S: Yes, she does, she's been overworking lately.

Present Continuous Tense—with "Always"

We ask students to imagine that they have worked together in the same office for many years or that they have been neighbors for a long time. In either case they have become fed up with one another's habits and begin to complain:

S1: You're always using my pen.
S2: You're always talking on the phone when I want to use it.
S1: You're always having parties on Saturdays.
S2: You're always slamming the door.

Simple Past Tense (a chain story or a step-by-step description)

You begin a story and ask each student to add one sentence. A story can be very simple (a description of one's day) or more difficult, beginning, for example, with the sentence: "Yesterday, when I wanted to open the door

to my house, I felt somebody's hand on my shoulder." The choice will obviously depend on the level of the group. A learner can also be asked to give a precise description of how he made tea or scrambled eggs or how he cleaned his teeth, etc. This can be used, in fact, for practicing any other simple tense.

Conditional Sentences II

We ask the learners what changes they would introduce if they were president, or a school headmaster, or any other person in power.

S1: If I were president, I would reduce unemployment.
S2: If I were Minister of Education, I would increase holidays.

Conditional Sentences III

T: Why didn't you come to meet me at the station?
S1: I didn't know you were coming. If I had known, I would have come.

T: Did you see the play on TV yesterday?
S2: No, I didn't. Perhaps if I had had more time, I would have seen it.

Must/May/Can't + Perfect Infinitive

T: I saw a tiger in the street.
S1: You can't have seen a tiger.
S2: You may have seen a big cat.
S3: You must have been tipsy.

I Wish + Past Tense

We simply ask them to express their present wishes.

S1: I wish I had more time.
S2: I wish I spoke French.

Had Better

T: I have a terrible toothache.
S1: You had better go to the dentist's.

T: I have run out of milk.
S2: You had better buy some.

Causative Use of "Have"

T: I see that your house has been redecorated.
S1: Yes, I've had it painted.
S2: And I have had the radiators changed.

To Want Somebody to Do Something (Imperative)

You can take any situation in which instructions are given, e.g., a housewife tells a cleaning lady what to do. This can be done in pairs.

S1: I want you to vacuum the living room and the dining room.
S2: All right.
S1: And I want you to do the washing.
S2: I will.
S1: And don't forget to take the dog for a walk.
S2: I won't.

Passive Voice

You can tell your learners that you do not know much about the town that you are visiting and ask them to give you some information. You can help them by asking questions.

S1: Our school was built 20 years ago, but it has been rebuilt recently.
S2: Motor traffic will be eliminated from the city center in the near future.
S3: The statue of our great poet was erected two years ago.

Apart from creating the possibility of practicing grammar in a relatively natural way, the kind of exercise mentioned above has some additional advantages.

First, new vocabulary likely to be needed in a given situation can be introduced in advance, which will make the activity more profitable and interesting.

Second, whenever it is possible you can make the exercise even more natural by having one student utter a sentence with a grammatical construction that is being practiced and another react to it somehow, as in the example with a housewife and a cleaning lady. You can also teach them how to respond beforehand. We did this when practicing the present continuous tense with "always," as described above. We asked students who were being "accused" to defend themselves, and here are some of the responses we got:

S1: You're always using my pen.
S2: Don't exaggerate. I do it only when I forget to bring mine.
S3: You're always reading a newspaper when there is a lot of work to do.
S4: That's not true. I read only in the mornings.
S5: You're always coming to work late.
S6: No, I'm not. It happened only once.

Finally, this type of activity enables you to teach and practice proper English intonation, and this is impossible with traditional grammar exercises, which are usually read in a perfectly indifferent tone. With the kind of activities described here, you can tell your students that they are using a living language and that under such and such circumstances a native speaker would use such and such an intonation. Therefore it is obvious that they should try to imitate it.

When practiced in this way grammar does not get separated from other elements of the language; on the contrary, it becomes inextricably interwoven with them. It is set firmly in the linguistic as well as in the social context. Students know that they are learning grammar not in order to be able to do exercises but to express more accurately their opinions, beliefs, feelings, etc.—to be able to communicate.

Broader activities

The exercises we have described tend to give practice in only one grammatical structure. The next necessary step, then, is to introduce activities requiring the use of several structures, which have been taught probably over a longer period of time. These demand a broader treatment, so we shall just list a few of them here, by way of example:

- interviews with famous people or globe trotters
- competitions
- "20 questions" game
- questionnaires
- court investigations (police interrogations)
- all kinds of roleplays, etc.

We are sure that these activities are well known to and used by many teachers of English.

We believe that if a learner is led through the intricate patterns of English grammar successively, step by step, beginning with simple imitation, then constructing sentences in limited and finally in broader contexts, it will be much easier for him to get across his meaning in a conversation or discussion. ■

Małgorzata Stapińska teaches EFL at the Jagiellonian University, Krakow, where she received an M.A. in English language and literature in 1980. Her special interests, besides literature, are building up mutual confidence in the classroom and increasing dynamics of the teaching process. She also translates scientific papers into English. **Jolanta Śniechowska** also received her M.A. in English language and literature from the Jagiellonian University in 1980, and has been teaching there for nearly three years. She taught earlier in language courses for both adults and children. Ms. Śniechowska is particularly interested in methods of developing communicative competence.

UNITED KINGDOM

Grids

RICHARD BADGER
Henley College of Education, Coventry

Looking back over the last year or so, a recurrent device in my elementary classes has been the grid. I would not claim that using a grid is a particularly communicative technique, but it seems an economic and versatile means of providing the practice that students need in order to be able to communicate freely.

Figure 1. A grid to use on an overhead projector for drilling.

"Has Daud got a TV?"
"Yes, he has."
"Has Nadia got a house?"
"No, she hasn't."
Etc.

Name	a TV	a car	a house	a video
Daud	✓	✗	✓	✗
Nadia	✓	✗	✗	✓
Zainal	✗	✓	✓	✗
Rohaya	✗	✓	✗	✓
Hanif	✓	✓	✓	✓

The grid first appeared in my lessons as a simple way of setting up a drill using an overhead projector. An example of one of these is given in Figure 1. For these drills I began by producing both questions and answers, then only questions, and finally the students were producing both questions and answers. These drills can be made more difficult by using *Wh*-questions or replacing verbal cues with pictures. An alternative is to use a partially blank chart that is filled in with appropriate information from the students.

Information-gap exercises

It was a short step from these drills to using the grid as the basis of an information-gap exercise. The information in the grid is split between the two partners (as in Figure 2). When I use these it is generally as a follow-up to the drill I have just described. These information-gap exercises can be made more difficult in the same way as the drills just mentioned, as well as by presenting the information on each student's sheet in a different order. The element of personal involvement can be increased by leaving two lines blank for "you" and "your partner."

A more extreme version of this involves splitting the class into groups, each of which fills out half of a blank grid. The class is then reorganized into pairs, with each member of the pair having worked on a different half of the grid. The students then ask each other questions and so fill in the blank half of their sheet. The cues for this sort of exercise must be very explicit. An example of a sheet that I have used is given in Figure 3.

Figure 2. An information-gap exercise, in the form of two work sheets, designed for practicing.

Student A: "Has Aziza got a radio?"
Student B: "No, she hasn't."
Student B: "Has Amar got a car?"
Student A: "Yes, he has."
Etc.

A	a radio	a car	a TV
Amar	✗	✓	✗
Aziza			
Mourad	✓	✗	✗
Meriam			
Wahab	✗		✓

B	a radio	a car	a TV
Amar			
Aziza	✗	✗	✓
Mourad			
Meriam	✓	✓	✓
Wahab		✓	

Richard Badger has taught in Algeria, Malaysia, and Jordan and presently teaches at Henley College of Education in Coventry. He holds a law degree from the University of Exeter, a post-graduate certificate in TESOL from the Institute of Education, University of London, and an M.A. in applied linguistics from Birmingham University.

Figure 3. An information-gap exercise, in the form of two work sheets.

Students fill in half of their own grid and then question their partner to fill in the rest of their grid. This exercise is designed to practice a series of questions such as:
"What is the name of your first person?"
"What did he eat?"
Etc.

Name	Food	Drink	Film	Cost

Name	Food	Drink	Film	Cost

A final variation on the information gap is to split the information among three or more students. I have used this technique only with groups of three, but there is no reason why larger groups should not be used, and increasing the possibility that the person you are asking may not have the information lends authenticity to the transaction. An example is given in Figure 4.

Figure 4. A three-way information-gap exercise, in the form of three work sheets, for practicing.

Student A: "Where did Hannah go for her holiday?"
Student B: "I'm afraid I don't know."
Student C: "She went to Moscow."
Etc.

A	Where	How
Alex	Algiers	plane
Claire		
Hannah		
Kevin	Paris	

B	Where	How
Alex		
Claire	Munich	
Hannah		
Kevin		boat

C	Where	How
Alex		
Claire		bus
Hannah	Moscow	train
Kevin		

Listening/reading

In the third technique using a grid, the students are given a grid that they fill in from a text (see Figure 5). I started using this technique as a listening exercise, but it works equally well for reading. One variation, when using it as a listening exercise, is to divide the class into groups and appoint one student as

Figure 5. A reading or listening exercise in which students fill out a chart from a text and then use the chart to answer a question or questions.

Last weekend three men went to three different towns.
Nathan did not go to Paris.
Umaru did not go to York or London.
Welack did not go to York.
Where did Nathan go?

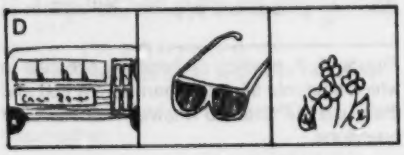
	York	London	Paris
Nathan			
Umaru			
Welack			

the reader in each group. As a reading exercise, the main drawback is that it takes a very short time. However, once the students are used to seeing the connection between the grid and the sentences, they can produce their own sets of sentences, which can then be used as a reading exercise for other groups of students.

Composition

Finally, an exercise that is only marginally based on the grid. This is a composition exercise, and an example is given in Figure 6. The exercise consists of four possible stages. First, the students match a cue, verbal or visual, with a paragraph of text. Then, optionally, they read a paragraph and from it produce a cue of the same sort as they used in stage one. (This stage is not included in Figure 6.) Thirdly, the students are given a cue that forms the basis of a piece of writing. Finally, the students may be asked to produce cues of their own and a matching paragraph on a separate piece of paper. Students then exchange cues, and a further set of paragraphs is produced. A comparison between the two paragraphs produced from the same cues is a source of much discussion. ■

Figure 6. Match the pictures with the paragraphs.



1. Yesterday Mark took a taxi into town. He bought an umbrella because it was raining. He also bought some flowers for his wife. He spent 50 dinars. He went back home at 6 P.M. He felt tired but happy.

2. Yesterday Tom took a bus into town. It cost one dinar. He bought an umbrella because it was raining. He bought some flowers for his wife. They were very expensive. He went home at 5:30. He was tired but happy.

3. Yesterday Jim took a taxi into town. It cost five dinars. Because it was sunny he bought a pair of sunglasses. He also bought a box of chocolates for his wife. He went home at 6 P.M. and gave the chocolates to his wife. She liked them a lot.

4. Yesterday Paul took a bus into town. It cost one dinar. It was very sunny so he bought a pair of sunglasses. He bought some flowers for his wife. Then he went home and gave them to his wife. She liked them a lot and so Paul felt happy.

Now write paragraphs for these pictures. Use your imagination as much as possible.

UNITED STATES

Puppetry in the ESL/EFL Classroom

JOLENE GEAR and ROBERT GEAR

Acquiring language through participating in activities that are not overtly pedagogic promotes variety and naturalness in language while developing conversational and linguistic skills. In the elementary-school classroom, puppetry is an activity ideally suited to this approach. Children from all cultures love the imaginative play to which puppets are so easily adapted. Because of this, puppets can serve as an excellent source of language acquisition in the ESL/EFL classroom.

A good way to introduce puppets to the classroom is with a surprise puppet show. Afterwards the children are given the opportunity to examine and play with the puppets. A fertile source of story plots for the teacher's show and the subsequent children's shows is Aesop's fables.

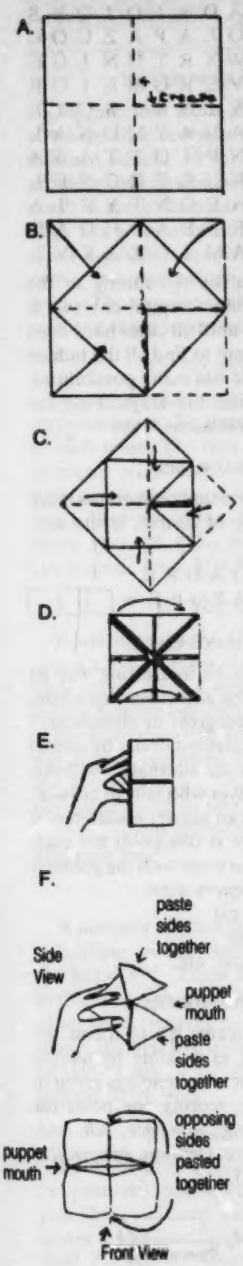
In planning the puppets the instructor leads the children in choosing or writing a story. Consideration of the kinds of animals or people, their size, quantity, and appearance, makes for stimulating discussion. Questions inevitably arise, e.g., "What is the long thing on the elephant called?" or "Can frogs be purple?" Language is used functionally in the actual construction of the puppets. For example, children may ask to have the glue passed to them or request a specific material. They can converse freely about their creations and frequently initiate some imaginative play and dialogues.

Once the story has been written and the puppets have been made, it is time for the children to enjoy the opportunity of showing off while at the same time having the security of hiding behind a stage. If no stage is available at your school, an impromptu puppet stage is easily made by turning a rectangular table on its side. Other props will depend on what the story entails. If your school has video equipment, the children are delighted to have their productions videotaped. The programs can be watched and suggestions made for improvements before putting on the show for a live audience.

The children are usually very pleased with their production and gain considerable confidence through having successfully produced a show. An added plus for the children in the ESL context is the admiration from native-English-speaking children, who often gather around to get a chance to play with the puppets, ask questions on how they are made, and seek help in making their own. This in itself can encourage new friendships, which is

important to the development and adjustment of the foreign child to a new culture.

We find that the puppets described below are well adapted to ESL/EFL classroom use because they are easy to make, inexpensive, and are constructed with readily available materials. An imaginative child can turn these simple puppets into elaborate creations. Essential materials for the puppets are construction paper, scissors, and crayons. Optional materials such as felt-tip markers, yarn, cloth, sequins, glitter, beads, and lace may contribute to the finished product.



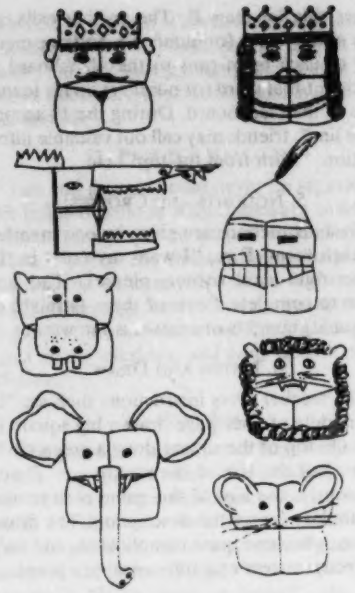
Puppet instructions

An 8½-inch by 8½-inch piece of construction paper is a good size to use. Larger or smaller puppets can be made by varying the size of the square accordingly. The square is folded in half and creased both horizontally and vertically, then opened to lie flat as in diagram A.

Fold all corners to the center as in diagram B. Use the crease folds as guides. Make sure that none of the paper overlaps. Turn the paper over. Fold all corners to the center again, using the crease folds as guides (diagram C). Fold the paper in half with the folded corners on the inside (diagram D).

Using both hands, insert the thumbs and index fingers under the flaps that have been formed by the previous folding (diagram E). Paste two opposing sides together (diagram F front and side views). The puppet head is now ready for decorating. Let your students use their imagination and have fun.

The following drawings depict some of the puppets that students have created.



THE DONKEY AND THE LION'S SKIN

(Adapted from Aesop's fables)

(*A lion puppet is lying on its side on stage. Enter donkey, singing.*)

Donkey: Hum de hum. Oh, what is this? A lion's skin. Wouldn't it be funny to put it on and scare everybody! (*The donkey picks up the lion puppet so that the donkey face is inside the lion puppet.*)

Elephant: (*coming on stage mumbling*) Oh, yes, and then . . . (*screams*) Oh, a lion. Help! Help! A lion. (*runs off stage*)

Hippo: Boy, that elephant almost fell over me. I wonder why he was in such a hurry. (*sees lion*) Help, a lion. Don't let him hurt me. Help! Help! (*runs off stage*)

Mouse: Nobody watches where they are going these days. I'm lucky that elephant and hippo didn't flatten me. Eek, a lion! (*runs off stage*)

(*Continue with set of puppets. Ad lib conversations.*)

Dragon: What is this? A lion, is it? I don't believe you are a lion. Let me hear your roar. Lions have great roars. (*pauses*) Well, I'm waiting to hear you. Roar for me.

Donkey: H-H-H HEE HAW. HEE HAW.

Dragon: (*laughing*) The mighty lion is nothing more than a donkey in a lion's skin. Look at the terrifying lion, everyone.

(*The other animals appear and laugh or boo as the donkey drops the skin and slowly moves off stage.*) ■

Jolene Gear and Robert Gear both have master's degrees in ESL from the University of Northern Iowa. Mr. Gear has taught English in Kuwait, Japan, and Mexico and is now teaching refugees in Iowa. Mrs. Gear has taught English in Mexico and the United States. She is presently taking a maternal leave of absence from teaching.

YUGOSLAVIA

Thirty Short Fun-Filled Games

DRAGINJA JEFTIĆ
Nastavnički Fakultet, Nikšić

Foreign language learning today is oriented toward the development of fluent, spontaneous communication, and the pupil's success in achieving this level of proficiency depends, to a great extent, on the teacher's methods and techniques. After many years of experience and experimenting in teaching students at the elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels, I have collected data strongly indicating that one of the most effective means of achieving communicative language is through the utilization of the communicative technique of games. Supplementing regular lessons by a large variety of game-activities motivates even the usually nonresponsive, shy, passive onlookers, and they become active participants, displaying their competence and newly found confidence in communicating in the foreign language.

Careful, meticulous preparation of all that is necessary for the success of a game is the responsibility of the teacher. The classroom atmosphere should be pleasant and relaxed, but disciplined; the environment should permit active participation of all class members. It is vitally important that the games be interesting (containing an element of healthy competition), quite simple (allowing all members to understand the rules efficiently for active participation), and easily comprehensible (demanding an appropriate vocabulary level). Games should be flexible, to permit alterations and adaptation for the different levels and abilities of the pupils, and they should also be limited in time from approximately 5

to 15 minutes, taking place preferably during the middle or at the end of a lesson. Care must also be taken to ensure that not just a few participants are predominantly active throughout the game-activity—all should be included.

In addition to the preparation and issuance of the required instructions for the game, the teacher's role includes constant supervision of the game, maintaining the tempo and (of vital importance) showing genuine pleasure, interest, and involvement in the game. It is essential that errors made by poorer pupils attempting to actively participate not be analyzed in detail in the form of a grammar lesson during a game. It is wise to remember that functional communicative mastery of the foreign language is preferable to grammatical correctness in such activities.

Since the time factor is of great importance to the teacher and frequently dictates the type of activity selected, it is useful to separate the activities into those that require five minutes or less and those that require from five to ten minutes. As the shorter activities are more frequently in demand, I have dedicated this entire article to them. Classroom activities meet with great success if they include both individual and pair work, as well as group and whole-class activities. Experimentation on a group of pupils ranging from 12 to 15 years of age proved the following games to be the most effective, interesting, fast moving, and exciting, as well as the most successful, enjoyable, and versatile of the numerous games that were tested.

GAMES

Duration: Five minutes or less
Level: any (adjust to suit grade level)
Number in group: unlimited
Aids: blackboard, chart, or individual sheets

1. Coded Dialogues

(one or two letters too many)

a. Herow manery aerre thereer iern yerour faermily?
Terhere arere ferive iern mery feramily.

b. Ha' ide yidou sideen Tidom?
Nido, Iid havide nidot seiden hidim fidor agides.
Ohid noid!

2. Back-to-Front Writing

Si s'rehtoM esrup no eht elbat?
On, s'ti ni reh gab.

3. Scrambled Words and Sentences

a. pctreiu; cleinp; praep.
b. to went the last I theater week.

4. Hurry Up

On one side of the blackboard the teacher writes a list of 20 known words (numbers may also be used) for team A, and the same words (or numbers) in a different sequence on the other side for team B. The teacher calls out one of the words (or numbers), and one member of each team runs to the blackboard to cross out that word (or number) on his team's side of the blackboard. During the 10-second time limit, friends may call out valuable information: "Fifth from the top!" etc.

5. Noughts and Crosses[1]

Oral instructions are given by one member of each team: E.g., "I want my cross in the upper-right-hand corner, please!" The first team to complete a row of three (straight or diagonal) noughts or crosses is the winner.

6. Listen and Draw

The teacher gives instructions such as: "In the middle of your page draw a big square in red. On top of the square draw a green circle about half the size of the square . . . ," etc. Obviously, the aim of this game is to review vocabulary for spatial description. The drawings can become quite complicated, and only perfectly correct examples receive a point.

7. Ladders

The teacher draws two separate ladders on the blackboard—one for team A and the other for team B—and writes two different words (one for each team) on the bottom rung. Team members take turns filling in different words on each rung, each word beginning with the last letter of the previous word. The first team to reach the top is the winner.

8. Find the Stranger

Within a specified time limit, different members of each team attempt to circle the stranger (the word that doesn't fit) in a group of four words. There are 10 sets of four words in the game. The first team to complete this correctly is the winner.

E.g.,	October	horse
	November	cow
	Remember	pig
	December	knife

9. Think Quickly

The teacher calls out a word, e.g., "Tree!" One member of each team runs to his team's blackboard and writes down 10 words rhyming with *tree*. (No help from the other team members!) The first to supply the 10 words correctly wins a point for his team.

10. Unjumble the Towns

On two different blackboards, the teacher draws blank maps of a country, using dots to show the positions of some cities. Alongside the maps are the jumbled names of 10 cities that are indicated on the map by dots. Team members take turns unscrambling the city names and filling them in on the map. The first team to complete the whole map is the winner.

11. Building Words

The teacher writes a set of letters on the blackboard, and the two teams make up as many words as possible from the letters within a set time limit. The team with the most correct words wins.

12. Find the Cities

Two copies of the following set of letters are written on two separate blackboards:

W A R S A W M A D R I D J Q B S
A B O N N E R O L A P A Z U O U
S E M O S C O W X R T U N I G C
H L E A R L S V E R O M E T O R
I G N E H E L S I N K I S O T E
N R I S T R O A N A Y M U N A L
G A T H E N S N R I O T T A W A
T D U B L I N K U R P R O N E L
O E N G L I S A E O N T Y R I A
N S A L G I E R S B A G H D A D
R C F O U B Q A M I L T A K V L

Team members take turns running to the blackboard and circling a capital city (vertically or horizontally) until all cities have been revealed. The first team to find all the hidden cities wins. (The game has many possibilities: Find the Months, Find the Days, Find the Seasons, Find the Professions, etc.)

13. Anagrams

The team that can do double anagrams more quickly, and correctly of course, is the winner. E.g.,

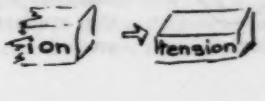
14. Granny's Cat

This game provides an interesting way to practice adjectives. The adjectives describing Granny's cat are to progress in alphabetical order and are to be provided orally by different members of each team alternately within a set time limit. Any player who fails to answer, is too slow, or repeats an answer is eliminated from the game. There is one point for each correct answer, and the team with the greatest number of correct answers wins.

E.g., Granny's angry cat
Granny's bad cat
Granny's crazy cat, etc.

15. Broken Bricks

Members of both teams try to mend the broken bricks as fast as possible by adding suitable syllables to the word endings given in a set amount of time, scoring one point for each correct answer, e.g., *-ion, -ice, -ich, -ted, -ant, -try, -ons, -ase,* etc. (*tension, apprentice, dispatch, painted, etc.*).



1. Editor's Note: Also known as Tic-Tac-Toe.

Draginja Jeftić teaches morphology and phonetics at Nastavnički Fakultet, a branch of the University of Veljko Vlahović. In addition to her 11 years of teaching in Yugoslavia, she has taught also in Australia. Ms. Jeftić has lectured in seminars, held workshops, and published journal articles. She is interested in methods of motivation in the teaching of foreign language in the primary school.

16. Surprise Envelope

One member from each team chooses an envelope that contains a cut-up sentence or message which, when assembled correctly, provides instructions to be followed. The end result is some form of a surprise or reward. E.g., *The tallest member of your team must go to the cupboard and from the top-right-hand corner take an envelope, which contains a surprise.* (The surprise could be a pencil for each member of the team completing its task first.)

17. Secret Codes

Messages containing information or even surprises are to be decoded by the members of each team. The first team to decipher the messages wins. E.g., the message *We shall have games again next week* may be written in the following code: *Xf tibmm ibwf hbnft bhbjo ofyu xffl.* (The next letter in the alphabet is used. Thus *Xf = We* and so on).

18. You're Next

Practicing adverbs through games can be very exciting. Teams A and B face each other. One player gives a sentence, e.g.: "Andrew speaks English beautifully!" A member of the other team responds by substituting a different adverb beginning with the next letter in the alphabet, e.g.: "Andrew speaks English correctly!" and so on. A team loses when it cannot provide the next adverb within a certain time limit.

19. I Spy

A member of team A says to team B: "I spy something in this classroom beginning with the letter 'C'!" Team B must guess the word in five tries, otherwise it loses its point and the other team receives it. If the word is guessed within the first five tries, that team has its turn to say: "I spy . . . ," etc. The team with the highest score wins.

20. Crazy Answers

Each member of team A writes a sentence (a question) commencing with *What would you like . . . ?* and each member of team B writes a sentence (an answer) beginning with *Well, I'd like. . . .* Team A's questions are put in a box and Team B's answers are placed in another box. No points are gained in this game, but it certainly is fun pulling out at random a question and an answer and laughing at the results.

21. Pass the Balloon

Fun and games should never be separated! An inflated balloon with a message inside is passed from player to player while music is played. When the music stops, the player holding the balloon must sit on it, burst it, read the message, and follow the instructions. E.g.: *Write your name on the blackboard, open all the windows, and jump up and down 25 times!*

22. Who Am I?

This game lends itself to a large variety of forms. A pupil may have the name of a famous author or historical figure pinned to his back. He then asks the members of the class various questions till he manages to guess the name of the person, e.g., "Is it a male or a female?" "Is he dead or living?" etc. The name of one of the pupils could be used, or perhaps an animal, fruit, or vegetable, instead of a famous person's name.

23. Mime

A player from one team acts out a word (e.g., *sleepily*) or a compound (e.g., *seasick*) or even an idiom, which he has drawn from a box. The pupils from his team must guess what the actor is trying to convey within a set time limit. A point is given to that team if they guess correctly. Then it is team B's turn.

24. Hot . . . Cold

An object is hidden somewhere in the classroom, and one of the players moves around the classroom looking for it. When he is close, the pupils call out "Hot!" and if he moves away from the hidden object, the pupils call out "Cold!" This continues until the time limit set for locating the object expires. (This game may also take the form of a treasure hunt on an island that is drawn on the blackboard. The pupils know exactly where the treasure is hidden, though the "pirate" does not. Directions such as "Go three steps to the left" may be used.)

25. Listen to Simon

Pupils must react quickly but must not be tricked into obeying any directions not preceded by "Simon says. . . ." E.g., "Simon says stand"; all must obey. "Sit down," however, must not be obeyed. Those who make mistakes are eliminated.

26. Surprise Packet

A small present is wrapped in up to 30 pieces of newspaper (depending on the number of pupils in the class), and between each layer of newspaper and the next there is a small piece of paper with a message on it, e.g., "Give this to the girl with the longest hair." The girl with the longest hair receives the parcel, tears away another layer of newspaper, and finds the next message. She reads it aloud: "Give this to the boy who has the biggest smile," etc., till, at last, someone receives the present, which may be a pen, a pencil, an eraser, or even a packet of sweets!

27. Send It Along

The teacher whispers a message to one of the pupils, who in turn whispers it to the next pupil. The message is thus sent along from pupil to pupil until it reaches the last person. Very often the final message has nothing to do with the original. The result can be very amusing!

28. Think Hard

The teacher writes a word or sentence on the blackboard, and the pupils are required to write as many words as possible from that word or sentence, excluding proper names. For example, *advantage: age, gate, ant,* etc. The team that writes the most correct words wins.

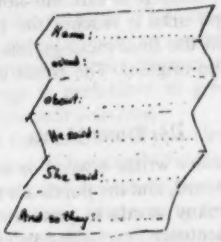
29. Funny Man

Divide the pupils into groups of three and give each group a clean sheet of paper folded twice in accordion fashion. The first child draws a head and all features required for the head. (Make certain that the other pupils do not see the finished product of the first pupil.) The second child now continues by drawing the trunk of the body, and the third child completes the figure by drawing the legs and shoes. No one has seen what the others have drawn. Once all three have completed their contributions, the entire picture is displayed. What "funny people" have been created! Pupils then have the task of compiling a short biography of the character they have created.

30. Funny Stories

A clean sheet of paper is folded similar to the way it was folded for "Funny Man," only this time there are more folds, depending on the number of players participating. (If six pupils are playing in one group, there will be five folds so that each child will have a section on which he may write his contribution.) Once again, it is important that no one be allowed

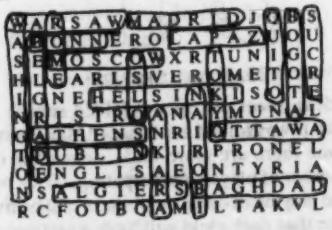
to see the contribution of any of the other pupils in his group. The first pupil fills in a person's name and immediately conceals it. The next pupil completes the second folded section by adding his information after the word *asked*. The third pupil adds his piece of information after the word *about*. The fourth child provides the text for *He said*. The fifth pupil provides the text for *She said*, and the last pupil concludes this short story by completing the sentence *And so they . . .* When this completed story is read in front of the class, laughter is guaranteed!



These 30 short, simple, fun-filled games chosen by a generation of school children as their most enjoyable games should be welcomed by many other pupils throughout the world. The value of game-activities as a link between the classroom and the child's own environment cannot be overemphasized. Through participating in games, pupils gain valuable practice in the speech patterns of the foreign language, in listening, reading, and writing, and they are encouraged to exert greater efforts toward correct, fluent, and communicative use of the foreign language. ■

ANSWERS

1. Coded Dialogues
   a. How many are there in your family?
   There are five in my family.
   b. Have you seen Tom?
   No, I have not seen him for ages.
   Oh no!
2. Back-to-Front Writing
   Is Mother's purse on the table?
   No, it's in her bag.
3. Scrambled Words and Sentences
   a. picture; pencil; paper
   b. I went to the theater last week.
8. Find the Stranger
   Remember
   knife
12.



13. Anagrams
   BOARD
   GRAPE = BAG

Letters

Teachers as Publishers

Dear Editor:

I would like to inform your readers of a small nonprofit publishing cooperative of teachers that has been formed here. Called the Kahurangi Cooperative (Te Ropu Kahurangi), its sole function is to produce publications that foster reading skill and interest in reading, vocabulary building, and confidence in speaking English. All the work of the cooperative is done in its members' out-of-school time. Altogether we have produced 50 publications ranging in size from booklets of 12 pages to books of more than 130 pages.

We have published a series of readers which we believe shows that it is feasible—if hard work—for teachers to take the development and publication of their classroom texts into their own hands. We feel that it is especially important to do this where the teachers are dealing with quite small or powerless minorities, the groups most likely to be ignored by official and commercial publishers. We would also like to suggest that it is possible for teacher groups to publish at a level of production competence comparable with that of commercial producers of books, and certainly to produce books of a format appropriate to the students.

Such small teacher groups are greatly assisted by the advances in printing technology. Older kinds of printing presses or processes can often be purchased relatively cheaply, yet may be very suitable for the small runs of books that teacher groups will probably wish to produce.

I believe it would be worthwhile for the editors of this journal to give space from time to time so that teacher publishers can advise of their own publications and can get in touch with other similar groups.

Readers can contact Te Ropu Kahurangi at 43 Landscape Road, Papatoetoe, New Zealand.

BERNARD GADD
New Zealand

Total Physical Response—Exploitation or Experience?

Dear Editor:

Here is a little something that has been spinning around in my head since last year. It is neither profound nor long, but it seems to me that there is something to be learned from my experience.

Last year a new bookcase was delivered to my office. Its arrival was long awaited and overdue. Books were piled up on tables and even on the floor. I couldn't wait to put things in order, but it was a big job for one person. Besides, I couldn't even reach the top shelf!

When students taking intensive English (four hours a day, five days a week) stopped in my office to say hello during their break, I was in the process of figuring out what to do and asked one of them if he could help me a minute. He proceeded to empty some cartons and classify books by category. Another student came in and joined him, and then another. Soon I had about five students busily working, speaking English, saying things like, "Hand me those big brown books on the second shelf . . . No, not the blue books; the brown ones." They also began asking me questions and making suggestions, such as, "Where should I put these small books?" "Are there any more of these?" "These books are about reading; why not put them over there with those?"

The teachers came in and joined the activity, and suddenly we realized that without having planned it, we were doing something far more valuable than anything anyone had planned for that day. In class we were struggling to get our students to practice question formation, and here they were, asking each other questions, asking their teachers questions, and asking the director questions. In class we were always looking for something to talk about that would get our students to use English in a natural way, and now, here they were, offering suggestions, giving advice, making group decisions, all on their own, totally involved in what they were doing.

The teachers agreed that we should all just stay there until we finished and then began using, reusing, and reinforcing certain structures. For example, we gave a lot of instructions, asking one student to ask another student for information or to do something: "Maidoubou, ask Moussa if he has found any more of these books." "Souleye, tell Ibrah that if he has more space, we have a lot of books that belong over there."

While involved in this activity, I remembered reading about an EFL teacher working with an athletic coach who was training a foreign track team. This teacher found that he was much more effective when he started joining the coach on the field and using the track as his open-air classroom. Suddenly it all made sense.

The point of this small incident is not very profound. As my students were busily carrying books around and dusting shelves, I wondered if I was not exploiting them. Would any of them complain? But the opposite seemed to be the case. They were glad to be moving about instead of sitting in their chairs. They were happy to be able to help. They were proud and excited to be able to really communicate with each other and with their teachers in English. At the end of the morning, one of them said to me, "Two months ago we wouldn't have been able to do that."

I could have moved the books myself. I could have requested help from the janitors. But a simple little task turned out to be a valuable experience for everyone. So next time you have something a little physical to do, why not invite your students to help? You may be surprised at the results.

SUE ROSENFELD
Niger

Learning English by Drawing

Dear Sirs,

I have been reading your magazine for several years and have been grateful for it.

In 1977 you published my article "The First Steps," and I was happy to receive letters from colleagues in different parts of the world who wanted more information about the method I described in the article. This has stimulated me to tell you about my experiences helping children learn English by drawing.

At our elementary school we teach English mainly by the audiovisual method. This method has proved useful as the students (aged 11–14 years) listen to the teacher and also see the meaning of the words on flashcards and wall pictures. However, some of the students tend to become passive, and in order to awaken them I introduced drawing, first in the lower forms, and later with the older students as well.

After the students hear the new word or see the object it represents, they draw it in their notebooks. Later they write the word under their drawing. They are thus involved in all the processes of acquiring new words: listening, seeing, drawing, writing.

The students draw at home, too. They have special notebooks—picture-dictionaries—in which they draw and write. On the other side of the notebook they sometimes illustrate the contents of the teaching units. From time to time I look at these notebooks and correct the mistakes; I also praise the students if they have done well. Therefore they take this work seriously.

Another activity I experimented with was having the students, as a homework assignment, draw cartoon strips using the words and structures they had learned. Some students drew very original strips; others illustrated the contents of the units in the textbooks ("In the Classroom," "A Toy Shop," "In the Morning," "A Race," etc.). All the strips were displayed on the classroom board, and we were proud of them. Also, students from other forms stopped in front of them and read them with interest.

I have noticed that through using pictures the students have learned to express themselves better, their vocabulary is larger, and they can use the grammatical structures better. I have found that the combination of listening and drawing is a very good motivator for students learning foreign languages in elementary schools.

MARJETA PETERLIN
Yugoslavia

[*We regret that there isn't room to include some of the samples of students' work that Ms. Peterlin sent us. They show creativity, originality, and appropriate English as well as skill in drawing.*—ED.]

Using Proverbs

Dear Editor:

I really enjoy all the letters and information that help me to make my lessons more interesting. Gaining so much while reading your magazine, I would also like to share my experience.

It concerns using proverbs. I found that idea especially helpful for lessons with beginners. You can start it after just the first 10 lessons. All you have to do is to choose a proverb that contains some of the words your students have already learned. As the proverbs are short, there will be only one or two words unknown to them.

I write the proverb on the blackboard, read it aloud, and ask the students to translate it. They can usually guess the meaning or even find a similar proverb in their native language. When everybody understands the proverb and knows the meaning of each word in it, I ask several persons to read it. Then I write the next two proverbs on the blackboard and repeat the procedure. Now I ask the students to read their notes in their copybooks and see if they remember the proverbs. After a minute or two, when the copybooks are shut, I erase single words from the proverbs. The students are asked to read the proverbs in full. Then I erase some more words and again ask the students to read the proverbs. In the end the students know the proverbs by heart.

In this way they can learn not only the words but even some grammatical structures. You can choose the proverbs according to tenses, prepositions, adjectives, adverbs, the possessive case, etc.

When you practice the simple present tense, you can make your lessons more interesting by providing the students not only with the sentences "My mother cooks dinner every day" or "He often goes to the cinema," but with such general statements as:

After a storm comes the calm.
Actions speak louder than words.
All doors open to courtesy.

When your students are studying the comparison of adjectives, you can use such proverbs as:

Better late than never.
Close is shirt but closer is the skin.
Two heads are better than one.
False friends are worse than open enemies.

When you want your students to pay attention to prepositions, you can again provide them with some proverbs:

Among the blind the one-eyed man is a king.
Between two evils choose the less.
That is playing *with* fire.

Proverbs are also useful in lessons for more advanced students. They constitute wonderful material for making students talk, for presenting situations where the proverbs can be applied; they can also be used as introductions for discussion. Aren't they good subjects for debate!

With foxes you must play the fox.
The devil isn't so black as he is painted.
Barking dogs seldom bite.
He who never climbed, never fell.
He who laughs at crooked men should walk very straight.

I am sure these are not the only ways proverbs can be used in our English lessons, and I would be grateful to anyone who can supply me with others. I would also like to improve my English by corresponding with other teachers, especially those specializing in business English.

ANNA ŁUCZAK
Czerw. Sztand. 85/47
80-377 Gdańsk
Poland

TEACHER CORRESPONDENTS

[We regret that no more names can be accepted until those on the waiting list have been published. Readers are requested not to write to this column until further notice.—ED.]

I enjoy reading the *Forum* and would like to correspond with other readers.
Brahim Abdesselamyene
Cité Taghiviat no. 113-42 Cherchell
Algeria

I teach English in Fatih College and my interests include reading, poetry, philosophy, sports, music, astronomy, and traveling.
Dursun Zengin
Özel Fatih Erkek Lisesi
İngilizce Oğretmeni
Dramun-Fatih
İstanbul-Turkey

I would like to correspond with other teachers in order to improve my English and exchange tapes and other useful information. My interests include art, guitar playing, foreign languages, and pop music.
Erdem Ekici
Zafer Mahallesi
Yeni Müze Caddesi 15/A
Afyon/Turkey

I am 28 years old, have been teaching for nine years, and am interested in traveling and all kinds of music.
Aynur Korkmaz
Gazi Lisesi
İngilizce Öğretmeni
Antalya-Turkey

I would like to correspond with other teachers.
Gülseren Onay
Antalya Lisesi
İngilizce Öğretmeni
Antalya-Turkey

I am a 24-year-old English teacher and I want to exchange ideas with other teachers.
Miss Erlinda Adalla
Cagayan de Oro College
Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City
Mindanao, Philippines

I am looking for correspondents from all over the world. I like travel, stamps, and reading. Reply assured.
Mustapha Khouribchi
117, Amal 5
Cité Yacoub El Mansour
Rabat, Morocco

I would like to correspond with *Forum* readers.
S. R. Coster
102/B, Elliott Road
2nd Floor, Flat No. 11
Calcutta-700 016, India

I would like to write to English teachers to exchange ideas and teaching methods. My interests: world affairs, travel, stamps, and reading. I am doing my doctoral thesis at Delhi, and I can correspond in English and German.
Mr. K. Malhotra
9A/37, W.E.A.
Karolbagh, Delhi-5, India

I am an 18-year-old candidate teacher of English and want to correspond with young teachers and teenagers around the world. I'm interested in science fiction and fantasy.
Mr. Krzysztof Dudek
Modrzewiowa Street 5
05-501 Piaseczno, Poland

I am a young teacher of English and would like to exchange ideas with other teachers around the world.
Mr. Cheng Wui Chiang
Sek. Men. Ayer Lanas
Tanah Merah
Kelantan, West Malaysia

I would like to correspond with *Forum* readers about English linguistics, phonetics, and literature.
Mr. Mohamed Azem
Village Tighilt-Boukssas
Commune de Yakouren
Tizi-Ouzou, Algeria

I would like to correspond with other teachers. My students and I are interested in magazines, stamps, postcards, and maps of American cities.
Antonio Canario Orrego
Liceo "Manuel Bulnes"
Libertad 169 Chignayante
Concepcion, Chile

I would like to create friendship with other teachers around the world.
Jaroslav Maštálko
507-45 Mladějov ul. 24
Obrec Jičín, Czechoslovakia

I am 26 years old and would like to exchange views with other teachers. My interests include literature, drama, painting, mythology, traveling, French, and Spanish.
Mr. El Ouafi Azzedine
Porte de la Reine
Rue Hababi N:5
Tetouan, Morocco

ANSWERS TO LIGHTER SIDE

Fun Time

A. *high time:* fully time; almost too late. Also, a good time (informal). The picture might also illustrate *high noon*, a phrase used to mean at or near the exact time of midday.

B. *time flies:* time passes very quickly

C. *Once upon a time:* at an indefinite time in the past. The traditional beginning of children's fairy tales.

D. *split second:* an instant; a flash; almost no time at all

E. *day in, day out:* everyday without fail; continuously

F. *serve time:* to spend time in prison

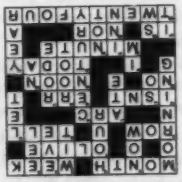
G. *a stitch in time:* a repair made early enough to avoid further trouble, as in the proverb "A stitch in time saves nine." (In sewing, a *stitch* is a single completed loop of a threaded needle through cloth.)

H. *rush hour:* a time of day, usually in the early morning and late afternoon, when traffic is very heavy because many people are going to or returning from their places of work

Brain Teasers

1. *Their* should be *There; is* should be *are; sentance* should be *sentence;* and there are only *three* errors, not four.
2. Insert the letter E and you get:
EVERY EVENING ERNEST EARNED EIGHTEEN CENTS EXCEEDINGLY EASILY.
3. You must count to *one thousand!*
4. arm; ear; toe; eye; leg; lip (also gum; jaw; hip; rib)
5. the letter N

solution to crossword puzzle



OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE MATERIALS

Readers who have developed English-teaching materials that they think would be useful to other *Forum* readers and that they would be willing to make available upon request are invited to send particulars to this journal's "Materials to Share" column.

Offerers should describe the item (tape, mimeographed pages, etc.) as clearly and succinctly as possible. Requesters should then communicate directly with the offerer and include international postal coupons and whatever else might be necessary (blank tape cassette, etc.) to receive the shared item. (See letter from Tom Ross in the January 1986 issue for a typical offering.)

Only offers of bona fide free-of-charge items will be published. Advertisements of items for sale or requests for free materials will not be published.

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In the United States subscriptions are available from: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

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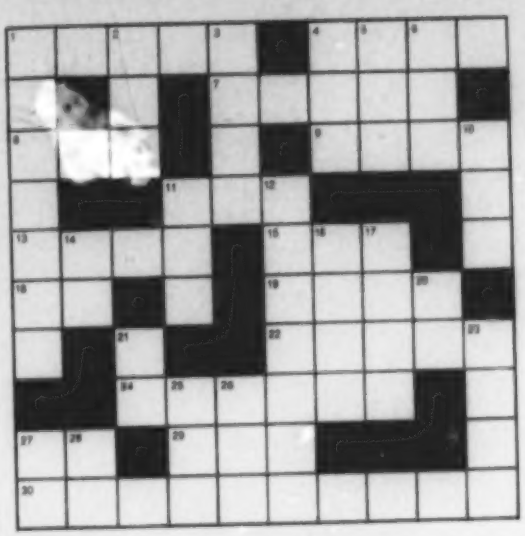
Lent For 7 Days Only "The Lighter Side"



ACROSS
1 Twelve of this make a 23 down
4 Seven days
7 A fruit pressed for its oil, especially in Mediterranean lands
8 A straight line of objects
9 Say
11 Part of a circle
13 Opposite of 27 across
15 Make a mistake
18 Opposite of *yes*
19 Middle part of the day
22 The day after yesterday
24 Sixty of this make 3 down
27 Opposite of 13 across
29 Correlative of *neither*
30 The number of 3 down in a day

DOWN
1 The early part of the day
2 At this time
3 30 across of this make a day
4 Mental resourcefulness; verbal ingenuity
5 Short for *evening*
6 A snake-like fish
10 Allow, permit
11 Past tense of *eat*
12 One hundred 23 down
14 Therefore
16 Underground part of a plant
17 Past tense of *ride*
20 North America (abbr.)
21 Contraction of *I am*
23 One one-hundredth of 12 down
25 Resting place for travelers
26 Negative
27 Not *he* or *she*
28 Opposite of NE

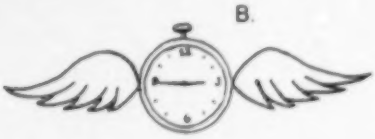
solutions to crossword puzzle and brain teasers appear on page 44.

Fun Time

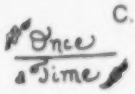
Each picture below illustrates a common English phrase, idiom, or proverb. Can you guess what it is? Answers and explanations can be found on page 44.

A.

B.



C.



D.

E.

F.

G.

H.

Brain Teasers

1. Their is four errors in this sentance. Can you find them?

2. By inserting the same letter 16 times in appropriate places this jumble of letters will be transformed into a sentence of some sense:

VRY VNING RNST ARND IGHTN CNTS XCDINGLY ASILY.

3. How far do you have to count before using the letter A in spelling a number?

4. Can you name at least six parts of the human body (no slang words) that have only three letters? (there are ten)

5. What is it that occurs once in a second, once in a month, once in a century, yet not at all in an hour, or a week, or a year?